

AURAL EXPERIENCE OF THE LANGUAGE OF WRITTEN NARRATIVE
IN SOME PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN AND ITS RELEVANCE TO LEARNING
TO READ

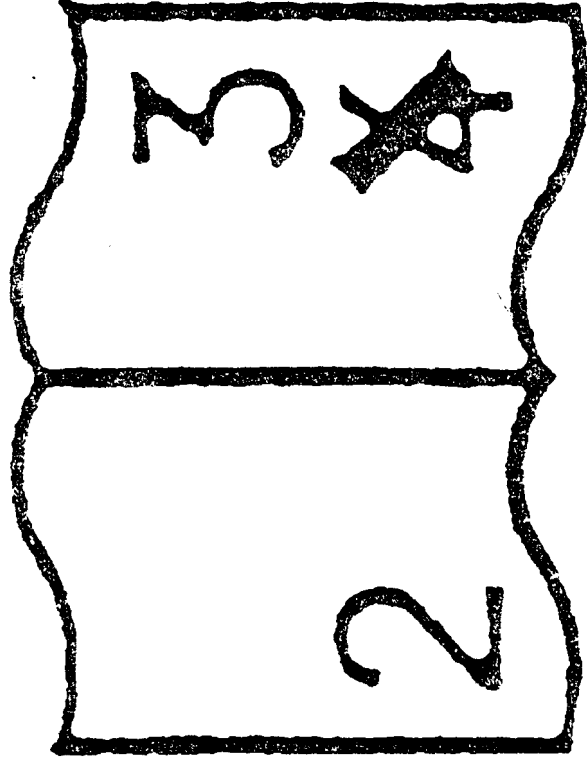
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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I am concerned to argue the case for the experience of hearing stories read aloud as a facilitator for the transition from spoken to written language that is involved in learning to read. I document this argument by evidence from two case studies, one of bed-time story readings with a three year old at home and the other of story reading in a nursery classroom.

The study begins with an examination of theoretical and empirical research into the part played by language in initial reading, and the sociolinguistic factors associated with early reading success in which the experience of hearing stories read aloud is shown to have a key role. It proceeds by exploring in some detail, within the framework of systemic grammar, discourse structure and structuralist poetics, the differences between oral and written language in their mature forms, and then examines whether a similar set of differences exists between the oral language of the five year old and the early reading texts she is confronted with in school.

It then moves towards a presentation of the two case studies, for each of which a number of tape recorded sessions is examined in close linguistic detail, again within the framework of systemic grammar. The purpose is to investigate the kind of language that is being exchanged in these sessions and in particular to characterise the contributions made by the children to these interactions. What is uncovered is a highly complex interweaving of different linguistic forms, characterised by an active construction of meaning on the part of both adult and child participants. The children show themselves capable of construing and in some cases constructing many of the forms of written language when these are embedded in the familiar language of conversation and when the focus is on the construction of narrative meaning.

Thus the study shows that through participating in story readings of this sort young children can learn many of the forms and functions of written language and experience what it is to read a narrative text.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction		10
Chapter One	The Contribution of the Child's Knowledge of Language to the Early Stages of Learning to Read	13
	1. Introduction	13
	2. The behaviourist tradition	13
	3. The language experience approach	19
	4. The psycholinguistic view	20
	5. Empirical evidence	39
	6. Inadequacies of the psycholinguistic view	49
	7. Summary	53
Chapter Two	Sociolinguistic Factors Affecting the Process of Initial Reading	55
	1. Introduction	55
	2. Dialect difference	57
	3. Oral language deficit	62
	4. Lack of familiarity with written language	76
	5. Ethnographic studies: reading and writing in cultural context	79
	6. Towards a fuller consideration of class-related difficulties in the uses of written language	81
	7. Summary	85
	8. Conclusion	86
Chapter Three	The Differences between Spoken and Written Language at Utterance/Sentence Level	87
	1. Introduction	87
	2. Towards a coherent view	88
	3. Comparison in terms of situation	92
	4. Comparison in terms of semantics	104
	5. Comparison in terms of structural configurations	111
	6. Other differences	121
	7. Complications to the model	123

Chapter Four	The Structures of Oral and Written Discourse	126
	1. Introduction: the case for discourse analysis	126
	2. Towards a systemic view of the discourse structure of informal conversation	128
	3. The structure of contemporary prose fiction	142
	4. Conclusions on the differences in discourse structure between conversation and contemporary prose fiction	172
Chapter Five	Utterance to Text? The Five Year Old's Experience of Oral Language Compared with the Demands of the Encounter with Written Texts in the Early Stages of Learning to Read	176
	1. Introduction	176
	2. Comparison in terms of situation	179
	3. Comparison in terms of semantics	186
	4. Comparison in terms of structural configurations	195
	5. Comparison in terms of discourse structure	211
	6. Summary, discussion and conclusions	230
Chapter Six	An Examination of Studies of Children Read Aloud to at Home before School and at School in the Early Years	238
	1. Introduction	238
	2. Reading readiness	239
	3. Claims concerning the value of the experience	240
	4. Quantitative evidence of reading-related benefit	243
	5. Observational and interpretive studies	257
	6. Conclusion	278

Chapter Seven	The Choice of Methodology for the Present Investigation	282
	1. Introduction	282
	2. Summary of the argument and evidence of the preceding chapters	282
	3. Appropriate data	284
	4. Evaluation of methodologies	286
	5. Carrying out a case study	295
	6. Summary and conclusions	308
Chapter Eight	How the field work was carried out and recorded	310
	1. The home study	310
	2. The school study	316
Chapter Nine	The Findings of the Home Study	331
	1. Introduction	331
	2. Analysis of situational features	335
	3. Analysis of semantic features	342
	4. Analysis of features of structural configurations	371
	5. Analysis of discourse structure	431
	6. Discussion and conclusions	454
Chapter Ten	The Findings of the School Study	468
	1. Introduction	468
	2. A diachronic examination of the children's storytellings involving the puppets	470
	3. The book environment of the classroom	495
	4. A selective diachronic analysis of Mrs G's class story readings	501
	5. Discussion and conclusions	540
Conclusion		548
Appendices		552

LIST OF TABLES

3.1	Features of the signalling systems of oral and written language	92
3.2	Features of the situations making maximal use of the signalling systems of oral and written language	103
3.3	Semantic features of the two varieties making maximal use of the signalling resources of oral and written language	110
3.4	Structural configurations of the two varieties making maximal use of the signalling resources of oral and written language	121
4.1	The semantic structure of the exchange in informal conversation (to be construed as guiding principles rather than firm rules)	135
4.2	The semantic structure of larger discourse units in informal conversation (to be construed as guiding principles rather than firm rules)	135
4.3	Features that realise exchange structure in informal conversation	140
4.4	Features that realise the structure of larger discourse units in informal conversation	141
5.1	Features of the situation of pre-school oral language at home and of encounters with early reading texts in school	186
5.2	Features of the semantics of pre-school oral language at home and of the early reading texts examined	194
5.3	Features of the structural configurations of pre-school oral language at home and of the early reading texts examined	210
9.1	Distribution of the four selected story readings between the categories listed	333
9.2	Distribution of conversational and narrative utterances	344
9.3	Distribution of story related and other conversational utterances	345
9.4	Differences between printed and spoken narrative utterances in terms of explicitness	355

9.5	Inexplicitness in the conversational utterances	358
9.6	Words used by Anna and her mother unusual in terms of the Mount Gravatt study	375
9.7	Words used by Anna and her mother unusual in terms of the Burroughs study	377
9.8	Classification system for sentence type	381
9.9	Distribution of utterances by broad syntactic types	383
9.10	Distribution of major and minor sentences	387
9.11	Distribution of types of major sentence	390
9.12	Distribution of types of co-ordinated sentence	394
9.13	Distribution of types of minor sentence	399
9.14	Distribution of nominal groups with proper noun or common noun as head word	405
9.15	Tenses of indicative verbal groups	407
9.16	Types of modulation in conversational utterances	409
9.17	Distribution of non-finite verb forms	411
9.18	Distribution of adverbial groups	414
9.19	Distribution of choices within the mood system	417
9.20	Distribution of marked contracted and uncontracted forms	419
9.21	Distribution of major sentences deviating from canonical word order	422
9.22	Distribution of cohesive devices	425
9.23	Distribution of exophoric reference and reference with unclear status	427
9.24	Distribution of verbally complete and verbally incomplete exchanges	442
9.25	Grouping of exchanges by constancy of commodity	445
9.26	Nature of commodity being exchanged	446
9.27	Inter-personal patterning of exchanges	448
10.1	Gender of selected children together with incidence of book-related behaviour	471
10.2	Incidence of features realizing inexplicitness	476

10.3	Incidence of features of verbal elaboration	479
10.4	Incidence of incomplete SPCA structures	481
10.5	Incidence of clauses additional to the main clause (excluding tags)	481
10.6	Features marking the transition from conversation to monologue	489
10.7	Ratio of present to past tense forms	490
10.8	Movement towards narrative language in terms of features discussed	493
10.9	Incidence of interruptions in class story readings	509
10.10	Distribution of incomplete and verbally completed exchanges	510
10.11	Distribution of commodities over exchanges	512
10.12	Incidence of mental verbs	514
10.13	Incidence of sequences of exchanges with continuity of commodity	516
10.14	Distribution of exchanges by initiator	518
10.15	Distribution of verbally completed exchanges by initiator	519
10.16	Incidence and distribution of questions by initiator	520
10.17	Distribution of answered and unanswered questions	521
10.18	Distribution of questions in terms of channel checking and status as knower of participants	523
10.19	Incidence and distribution of teacher feedback in exchanges where teacher asks a question as primary knower and receives a child response	525

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Key to transcription conventions	552
Appendix 2	Transcripts of home story readings	553
Appendix 3	Transcripts of children's story readings with puppets	580
Appendix 4	Transcripts of teachers' class story readings	609
Appendix 5	Transcripts of children's co-operative story 'readings' in class	666

INTRODUCTION

Nearly all my life I have been involved in some capacity in the thoroughly pleasurable business of sharing children's story books - as a child with my parents and as a teenager and adult with a younger brother, pupils, and my own children. Gradually I came to realise, however, that a practice taken for granted in my family as in countless others as the major context of children's initiation into books, was in danger of being marginalised in a school system increasingly pushed towards an emphasis on readily assessable kinds of learning. It seemed to me that its contribution towards the process of learning to read deserved a thorough exploration.

However, hearing stories read aloud in the pre-school years is now far more widely recognised as a major contributory experience to learning to read than it was when I started on the slow business of writing a thesis in the margins of a full-time job in teacher education. Recent research has shown the value of investigating in an observational rather than experimental way, a practice that has for centuries been associated with literate homes (Wells 1982a, Heath 1982a). It has also shown that parents can, and in many instances do, play a central part in determining their children's success in learning to read (Hewison and Tizard, 1980). And in the world of linguistics much more attention is now devoted to the differences between spoken and written language than was the case even ten years ago (Chafe 1982, Tannen 1982). This has prompted fruitful investigation into learning to read as the development of a second language variety, different from the first in terms of form and function (Torrance and Olson 1985, Michaels 1986).

To date such research has yet to look in detail at the linguistic transactions through which such reading aloud takes place or at the nature of the narratives concerned. What has been revealed so far indicates a marked contrast between the abundant and positive early lessons in literacy that pre-school children tend to receive in middle class homes as they share pleasure in books with their parents, and the relative absence of such experience in working class homes. Moreover it does not appear that the early years in school give working class children an experience of similar quality to that provided in middle class homes.

In this study I am concerned in part to explore in some linguistic detail what is going on during some home story readings, including an examination of the narratives at their heart. I am also concerned to explore what is happening in the classroom of a nursery teacher who appears to be making a very similar experience available to children who do not in the main come from homes where books are shared enjoyably with children. It would seem that the recent research referred to above justifies a project planned in rather a different climate.

Since I am concerned to provide a dynamic account of these story readings, the tools I use to analyse them are systemic grammar, discourse analysis and structuralist poetics. By these means I can give an account that relates form to function, that foregrounds the relationship between the participants and that sets this enterprise in the context of the processes we all engage in when we make sense of narrative fiction.

But it is not as a linguist, sociolinguist or literary theorist that I approach this enterprise. My concern is to use whatever tools will aid me as an educator to discover more productive ways of assisting children to make sense of written texts. No one academic

discipline can reveal what needs to be learnt and how that learning can best be facilitated. Nor can any single discipline ~~can~~ give an explanatory account of the complex mixture of intuition and conscious planning that guides the actions of parent and teacher.

CHAPTER ONE

The Contribution of the Child's Knowledge of Language to the Early Stages of Learning to Read

1

Introduction

In this chapter my intention is to explore theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence concerning the role of the child's knowledge of oral language in the initial stages of learning to read, with a view to establishing a starting point for the examination of the contribution of the child's aural experience of written language. I will examine the theoretical contributions first and then set those theoretical propositions that seem of interest against relevant empirical findings.

I begin with two working definitions. By 'reading' I mean the process in which, from a graphic text, the 'reader' constructs meaning which can be validated by reference to the words of the printed or written text. Unless it is otherwise stated, I use the term 'the child's knowledge of oral language' to refer to tacit knowledge of which she has no conscious awareness and which she is incapable of formalising explicitly, yet which guides her production and reception of oral language. Throughout this thesis the written text I am principally concerned with is English presented in standard orthography.

2

The behaviourist tradition

In the earlier part of this century, despite receiving considerable investigatory attention (particularly in the United States) the initial stages of learning to read, here termed initial

reading, were seldom presented in an explicit theoretical framework. To identify the various conceptions of the role of the child's knowledge of language, it is therefore necessary to piece together the implied theories behind earlier recommendations and sets of reading material and to set these beside the explicitly stated theories of later years.

2.1

The whole word and synthetic phonic approaches

For most of the first half of this century, the teaching of early reading was an area of sharp controversy, mainly between proponents of the whole word or 'look and say' approach and those of the synthetic phonic approach (Chall 1967). The whole word approach takes words to be the smallest whole units of written language, and therefore, according to gestalt theory, easier to perceive than the letters which are their fragmentary constituent parts. Particularly for children, words are held to be more concrete and more familiar in their oral form than are letters and their phonemic counterparts. The synthetic phonic approach, on the other hand, takes graphemes (letters or letter clusters representing single phonemes) to be the basic units, the key to the code that relates oral to written language. Therefore in one approach initial reading starts with word recognition, whereas in the other it starts with recognition of the commonest phoneme/grapheme correspondences, and the synthesis of these into one syllable words. Consequently there is a contrast in the implied contribution of the child's knowledge of language to the development of reading. The whole word method implies oral/aural familiarity with the words used in the text, whereas the synthetic phonic approach implies that the

child should be able to bring to consciousness her tacit knowledge of the phonemic system, so that she can conceptualise phonemes as distinct entities which are combined to form words.

Ironically the texts produced by these opponents bear marked similarities. Both sorts tend to employ a high proportion of short words whose spelling is governed by the commonest phoneme/grapheme correspondences, both make heavy use of repetition and both achieve this by means of a language variety with syntactic and semantic peculiarities distinguishing it from all other varieties of written or spoken language. (See, for examples, Murray 1964, Ladybird Key Words Reading Scheme and Fasset 1912 Beacon Primers as examples of very similar texts written for two approaches).

For these approaches share some underlying assumptions. Both imply a conception of the learning involved in initial reading as primarily an externally controlled and perceptual matter: the child is taught to connect each graphic element on the page in front of her to a corresponding word or phoneme and, from sequential recognition of the linguistic parts, to string together a textual whole. The influence of behaviourism, the dominant learning theory of the time, is clear. Like all learning, learning to read is seen as externally controlled passive connectionism, the bonding of responses to stimuli by means of a schedule of reinforcement. Reading itself is defined in terms of the methodology of its teaching rather than its use in the world outside the school (Chall 1967).

2.2

The 'linguistic' approaches of Bloomfield and Fries

The first overtly linguistic contribution to the study of initial

reading posed a slight challenge to this view of reading as manipulated connectionism, but paradoxically none at all to received ideas on the role of language in the process. Although concerned to present the beginning reader with texts quite rigidly bound by the simplest phoneme/grapheme correspondences, Bloomfield (1933) differs from the previously mentioned advocates of synthetic phonics in his insistence that the child should not be instructed to 'sound out' then 'blend' the letters of the text into words, but should match these as wholes to their spoken counterparts. However, unlike the advocates of the whole word method, Bloomfield lays down that words should be grouped in such a way to permit the child herself to infer the relationship between phonemes and graphemes. So for Bloomfield the child brings to the task of learning to read a knowledge of words and phonemes, but makes active use of this knowledge in a process involving the drawing of inferences about phoneme/grapheme relationships rather than merely passively matching perceptions.

Bloomfield's ideas have not met with great popularity: although tried out in a number of schools from the 1930's, his primers were not published for over twenty years (Bloomfield and Barnhart 1963). The texts of his fellow linguist Fries differ from these only in his choice of the morpheme as the basic linguistic element (Fries 1962).

2.3

Discussion of these views

Despite the variations indicated, these conceptions of initial reading all see apprehension of the meaning of the text as something that is arrived at for both the unskilled child and the practiced adult by a process of matching visual symbols to variously conceived

linguistic elements, a process that is linear, sequential and cumulative. Recognisable language is seen as the successful outcome of a decoding process. Knowledge of linguistic structures above the level of the word does not determine or even contribute to this perception matching process. There is a similarity between this view of reading and the process of 'painting by numbers' where a recognisable picture emerges as the person wielding the brush applies colours to the correspondingly numbered shapes on the paper. Both the picture and the verbal text are produced by the 'blind' matching of an element from one system to an element from another, unguided by any shaping intention or set of relevant expectations.

Indeed for Bloomfield and Fries the argument is carried to its logical conclusion in that reading is presented as nothing more than decoding. Processes such as the comprehension of literal and inferential meaning which proponents of the whole word and synthetic phonic methods see as the higher skills of reading, are for both Bloomfield and Fries post-reading activities, involving language but not reading itself.

Nonetheless, as previously mentioned, all these views of reading and of learning to read share a fundamental conception of the process of reading as one that is linear and cumulative, in which the basic elements of the text, whether these are taken to be phonemes, morphemes or words, are first decoded then banked with those already decoded until they form recognisable stretches of language.

The adequacy of the conception of learning to read as paired associate learning will be tested against relevant evidence at the end of this section. At this point it should be noted that just as Chomsky has seen that one of the striking features of oral language is

the child's ability to produce language she has not heard, so one of the striking features of initial reading is the child's ability to 'recognise' words and visual morphemes that have not previously been presented to her simultaneously in graphic and aural form (Chomsky 1959). This 'creativity' cannot be explained by paired associate learning.

But the contribution of the child's phonological, morphological and lexical knowledge should not be dismissed, nor should paired associate learning, which cannot provide the whole answer but may still play some part.

2.4

Gagné's development of this theory

Indeed the behaviourist view of reading and reading acquisition is still being developed. Gagné has recently put forward a more complex model in this tradition. Despite the increased complexity of the model, reading acquisition is still presented as cumulative associate learning which proceeds in a mechanical automatic fashion not involving active theorising or inference. For Gagné the process starts with the pairing of single letters with their corresponding phonemes and moves on to the oral production of consonant and vowel combinations, then syllables and syllable strings in regularly spelt words. Later stages in the process include the mastery of rules for irregularly spelt words (Gagné 1970).

This conception does not imply any wider notion of the contribution made by the child's knowledge of language nor any richer view of the child's mental operations.

The language experience approach

Outside the behaviourist tradition, untrammelled by its conception of learning as an orderly mechanical process in which children should be presented with carefully graded stimuli and rewarded for correct responses, the language experience approach has developed, shaped principally by outstandingly gifted teachers who have sought to give children's school learning something of the quality of intensely purposeful activity seen in aspects of their play. This approach varies in detail from one proponent to another, but in essence the child first talks to the teacher about a significant experience, the teacher then writes down what is said, which then becomes the child's reading text. Because the language is significant and familiar to the child, it is held to provide intrinsic motivation for the process of decoding (Ashton Warner 1961 Stauffer 1970).

It is emphasised by exponents such as Stauffer that the child's earliest reading text is consequently composed of language familiar to her in terms of lexis, word order and complexity of relations both within and between sentences. The implication is that these factors aid the child in the earliest stage of learning to read and that this stage involves the recognition of meaning of some sort. Stauffer also states explicitly that children's phonological, lexical and syntactic knowledge all contribute to the success of learning to read. Reading must be thought of essentially as a communication process and taught that way. The explicit teaching of phoneme/grapheme correspondences is not excluded but is seen to take place most profitably within a meaningful linguistic context (Stauffer 1970).

This conception of reading as a communicative process from its

earliest stages certainly presents the child learner as more than the obedient recipient of another's teaching. However although the recommendations are clear, the theory is vague: it is not certain whether the sentences containing meanings that are familiar and important to the child are held to be read more readily because the child is better motivated, or because she is, in some unspecified way, making use of her syntactic and semantic knowledge.

In Britain this approach has been more thoroughly explicated and developed in recent years by the Programme in Linguistics and English teaching, resulting in the Breakthrough to Literacy materials, now widely used in British schools which are examined in Section 7.3 of Chapter 2 (McKay, Thompson & Schaub 1970).

4

The psycholinguistic view

Whereas those advancing behaviourist views of learning to read are primarily concerned with the matching of printed items (whether graphemic, morphemic or lexical) with their spoken counterparts, proponents of psycholinguistic views are concerned with such matters as the generation of syntactic structures and the recognition or construction of propositional meaning.

The explicit entry of syntax into theories of learning to read can be attributed in large part to the influence of Chomsky, who sees language essentially as a syntactic system. In explicating his theory of transformational grammar, Chomsky introduces the ideas of linguistic universals, deep and surface structure, competence and performance, all of which have altered conceptions of the role of knowledge of language in reading (Chomsky 1957). His exploration of

the psychological implications of these linguistic ideas has also had a profound influence on thinking about reading. Chomsky finds the explanations of the behaviourists quite inadequate to account for the young child's mastery of language as he conceives it, that is as a highly complex syntactic system (Chomsky 1959).

4.1

The linguistic basis for a psycholinguistic view of early reading

4.1.1

Chomsky's view of language acquisition and related empirical evidence

Since Chomsky sees the set of syntactic rules for each language as a particular realization of the universal principles on which all languages are constructed, he advances the hypothesis that these linguistic universals are present in some form in the mind of the neonate infant.

The "innateness hypothesis" then, can be formulated as follows: linguistic theory, the theory of U. G., ... is an innate property of the human mind. In principle we should be able to account for it in terms of human biology.
(Chomsky 1976 p.34)

The child is held, with the aid of this linguistic theory, to develop language as follows. When exposed to erratic samples of a particular language she constructs increasingly complex syntactic rules which move ever closer to the particular syntactic rules of the particular language around her. These syntactic rules rigidly constrain the young child's utterances (Chomsky 1965). Although empirical research of the psycholinguistic school inspired by Chomsky has invalidated the idea that the young child is exposed only to a random and erratic sample of adult speech, it has strongly endorsed Chomsky's view of the

language learner as actively generating successive and increasingly refined approximations to adult syntax (Brown 1972, Cazden 1972). It is now generally accepted and is here taken as axiomatic that the child's production of oral language, or performance, is limited by the current state of her syntactic theorising, or competence. Thus although a two year old readily produces utterances she has never heard before, these will inevitably conform to her current syntactic theories. Furthermore she cannot even imitate parrot fashion utterances which are the product of more complex rules.

4.1.2

Goodman's application of Chomsky's ideas to the process of initial reading

K Goodman has given perhaps the closest account of the precise contribution made by the child's knowledge of syntax to the process of reading acquisition. The concepts of deep and surface structure are integral to his model in which oral and written language are presented as alternative surface realizations of the same deep structure. Goodman uses the word 'decode' in a way different from that of other writers on reading. For him the mature silent reader directly 'decodes' the meaning that lies in the deep structure. The same person reading aloud first 'decodes' this meaning, then 'recodes' it as oral language. Consequently such oral reading may differ in phonemic, lexical and syntactic detail from the written text.

Goodman maintains that the reader achieves this decoding and recoding by a selective use of graphic information from the text together with her own semantic and syntactic knowledge using only such graphic information as is necessary to validate the prediction of a

decodable language structure. For the initial reader the processing of graphic information is more laborious, and more graphic cues are needed to validate predictions with sufficient accuracy for the reader to avoid erroneous deep structures. However Goodman holds that even in these initial stages, preoccupation with phonological and lexical accuracy in oral reading may short circuit this system and divert the child from comprehension.

Where Goodman differs from Chomsky is in according the semantic system more prominence, seeing it as not simply a function of the syntactic system. Goodman sees language essentially not as a formal system manipulated in a formal way but, like Stauffer, as a means of communication. Goodman states:

Reading is a psycholinguistic process by which the reader (a language user) reconstructs, as best he can, a message which has been encoded in a graphic display.
(K Goodman 73 p.22)

However, the debt to Chomsky lies not only in Goodman's adoption of the concepts of deep and surface structure and linguistic competence whose limits prevent the initial reader from producing syntactic structures outside the bounds of her own personal grammar. Chomsky's influence can also be seen in Goodman's conception of the initial reader as an active constructor of oral language guided by systematic use of semantic and syntactic knowledge as well as graphic information from the text.

4.1.3

The limitations of a Chomskyan view of initial reading

Chomsky's influence on ideas about initial reading has been wide. For well over a decade a linguistic approach to initial reading has invariably been taken to acknowledge a contribution from the child's

syntactic knowledge as well as the contributions from the phonemic, morphemic and lexical knowledge whose roles were recognised by Bloomfield and Fries. In some cases the influence was almost immediate. Although she does not make explicit her view of the relation of comprehension to decoding, Emig sees the child's knowledge of syntax as combining with her knowledge of phonology and morphology to provide:

... the most powerful resource the teacher
of reading can tap to aid the students
comprehension.

(Emig 1965 p.128)

Most notably through Goodman's application of his ideas to the field of reading in general and initial reading in particular, Chomsky has extended our understanding both of skilled reading and of initial reading. He has enabled us to see both the skilled reader and the initial reader as generators of language conforming to certain syntactic constraints. But Chomsky's theories cannot be used to provide any satisfactory explanation of how the child learns to use the graphic information on the page, enabling her to check these syntactic predictions. Nor can it provide us with any indication of any distinctive function of written language that might provide a motive impelling the child to master the task of construing the graphic presentation of language.

The chief reason for this is that Chomsky sees language learning as a special case. To recapitulate briefly - Chomsky hypothesises that language universals are in some way present in the infant's mind and that consequently the child's mastery of syntax is not arrived at by a process of uninformed inference.

A consideration of the character of the grammar that is acquired, the degenerate quality and narrowly limited extent of the available data, the striking uniformity of the

resulting grammars, and their independence of intelligence, motivation and emotional state, over wide ranges of variation, leave little hope that much of the structure of the language can be learned by an organism initially uninformed as to its general character.

(Chomsky 1965 p.58)

Thus although he sees that the study of linguistics reveals important knowledge about the workings of the human mind and should consequently be viewed as a branch of psychology, yet he also sees that language learning in the young child is qualitatively different from other forms of learning. Consequently the child's induction of the syntactic structure of her language cannot, according to Chomsky, provide a model for her mastery of the similarly complex relationship between the graphic and morpho-phonemic systems of written and oral language.

4.1.4

Contributions from other linguistic perspectives to ideas about initial reading

While Chomsky's has been the most marked linguistic influence on psycholinguistic theories of early reading, the views of other linguists have had a certain influence. Lefèvre advances intonation as an additional category of tacit linguistic knowledge that can be fruitfully brought to bear on the task of learning to read (Lefèvre 1968). He emphasises that knowledge of the intonational system is acquired earlier than other linguistic knowledge in the process of oral language acquisition. He contrasts the rich intonational patterns of the language of young school children with the monotonous patterns of reading books. Intonation conveys supra-segmentally, information of a semantic and syntactic nature, and it seems that Lefèvre intends that the child should be enabled to use her tacit

knowledge of the system to recognise what he terms "meaning-bearing language patterns" (Lefèvre 1968 p.301).

He does not specify clearly how such knowledge can be used by the child, but the idea is consistent with other psycholinguistic theories examined above. The child might use this knowledge to recognise intonation patterns appropriate to groups of words, complete such patterns, assigning appropriate words to the pattern. It is an interesting idea, worth examining against empirical evidence.

For most proponents of the psycholinguistic view of reading Chomsky, with his view of language as primarily a formal system, remains the seminal linguist. However the conception of language that informs Goodman's view of literacy, certainly after 1973, owes something to Halliday as well as Chomsky (Halliday 1970, 1973). Following Halliday, the later Goodman presents language as primarily a functional system. In short Halliday sees language as social semiotic, a system of meaning potential which the child develops through the medium of social interaction. The child learns language in order to mean. This act of making meaning is a social act through which she constructs and reconstructs her relationship with her interlocutors and the wider world. Halliday says of learning to read and write

Fundamentally it is an extension of the
functional potential of language.
(Halliday 1978 p.57)

This view of language and of reading cannot be said to be the accepted or mainstream psycholinguistic view, but it is the one that informs this thesis.

4.2

The psychological basis for a psycholinguistic view of early reading

In presenting language learning as a special case and in focussing on syntactic learning rather than lexical or phonemic learning, Chomsky cannot provide us with a sufficient foundation for a theory of initial reading. Those who advance a psycholinguistic view of early reading draw on the work of cognitive psychologists as well as linguists.

4.2.1

Cognitive psychologists' views of human learning

The school of cognitive psychology presents the learning of the human child as an active intentional process very different from the accumulation of associations advanced by the behaviourists. Kelly sees that the constant purpose of child and adult is to make sense of the world and to test that sense in terms of its predictive capacity (Kelly 1955). Piaget sees learning as an active striving for adaptation to the environment through the use of schemata or internal representations of this environment. This adaptation involves assimilation as the learner interprets her experience in the light of her schemata, and also accommodation as she modifies her schemata in the light of her experience (Piaget 1950). Although differing from Piaget on the means by which this is achieved, Bruner also sees learning as a matter of restructuring representations. In his view this learning takes place in order that the learner might predict what is going to happen more accurately, and therefore be in a better position to control it (Bruner 1968).

Piaget's theories lay heavy emphasis on qualitative differences

between the schemata of children and adults, stressing the limitations of children's thinking in the early stages, notably the inaccessability to the young child of inferential thinking of a kind that adults would regard as rational. As stated above, the child's learning, like that of the adult, is viewed as a complex process involving the modification of mental structures rather than the mechanical accumulation of associations. But in the child under the age of seven or so, this learning is held to be limited by the dependence of these structures on concrete action and the child's inability to decentre, to view a situation from another perspective.

These limiting features are seen as a function of culturally invariant maturation processes, and therefore are held to present very real limitations to the child's thinking, limitations which would certainly prevent oral language learning being viewed as a typical instance of the child's learning.

Furthermore in a Piagetian view, these limitations must surely affect the use the child makes of her linguistic knowledge in the process of learning to read, ruling out inference as a possible explanation of the development of control over the graphological/phonological relationship.

Piaget does not, of course, have the last word. In recent years advances in child psychology have shown the young child to be capable of very complex forms of mental activity. Bower has shown that very young infants are able to screen sensory input with reference to information stored from every day experience (Bower 1975). Others have shown the intricate inferential reasoning achieved by children who have not yet reached their fifth birthday (Donaldson 1978). These achievements cannot be explained by passive associationism of the

behaviourists, and call into question the limitations on children's thinking advanced by Piaget.

4.2.2

The influence of cognitive psychology on ideas about early reading

Such recent work has opened the way for a more complex view of the child's mental processes in learning to read, and consequently of the use that she can make of her linguistic knowledge. The child can be seen as an active theorist not only about oral language but also about its relationship to written language, not only as a searcher for syntactic principles, but also an active participant in the construction of meanings and of the systematic relations between spoken and written words. The influence of this thinking on such followers of Chomsky as Goodman, is clear.

And Goodman does not stand alone. The combination of such insights from cognitive psychology with previously mentioned concepts from the field of linguistics has permitted the development of the psycholinguistic school of reading, whose prominent members include Gibson and Levin, Frank Smith, Lefèvre and Rumelhart as well as Goodman (Gibson and Levin 1975, Smith 1971, Lefèvre 1968, Rumelhart 1976).

The cognitive aspect of the process of reading acquisition has been elaborated in clearest detail by Gibson and Levin and others of the Cornell group (Gibson and Levin 1975). For them the child learning to read is learning to make increasingly complicated differentiations between graphic features, in the light of her linguistic knowledge. She starts by differentiating between individual letters, between letters grouped in morphemes, between

whole words and between phrases and sentences. This differentiation is achieved through the perception of sets of distinctive features. These the child perceives not through externally manipulated association learning, but through active search strategies such as comparison and scanning. Furthermore it is not a cumulative linear process with the perception of lower order elements preceding that of higher order elements, but a multi-level operation, in which the child attends simultaneously to elements at different points in the hierarchy.

Individual letter recognition is seen as a necessary but not intrinsically rewarding achievement. The desire to identify written text in terms of familiar oral language is held to provide the necessary intrinsic motivation for reading meaningful text, in the course of which the reader makes use of information extracted from the phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic and semantic systems. The process is defined by Gibson and Levin as follows:

To learn to read is to learn a system of rules and strategies for extracting information from text. Cognitive learning of this sort is auto-regulated, that is, what is learned are those strategies which extract information efficiently.

(Gibson and Levin 1975 p.332)

They go on to characterise as artificial the issue of the single unit with which to start the teaching of reading since, if perceptual search is multi-level, instruction should supply multi-level information,

... so that the child can make use of sentences, words, syllables, letter clusters etc. with particular attention to those levels with which the child is having trouble.

(Gibson and Levin 1975 p.332)

Thus reading and reading acquisition are presented as multi-level processes involving the simultaneous active processing of different

levels of language.

Exactly how the reader relates the information obtained from the different levels of language is not made clear by Gibson and Levin. Information-processing has provided a model for this, explicated most fully by Frank Smith and Rumelhart (F Smith 1971, 1973, 1979 Rumelhart 1976). Reading for Smith is concerned not with the reconstruction of the writer's message as Goodman conceives of it, but with the reduction of the reader's uncertainty. To identify a word in isolation from anything that might provide a clue about its identity, the reader needs more visual information than she does to identify the same word in a meaningful context. Consequently attention to graphic information is greater in the former case. The various levels of language are involved in a trade-off: the more the reader is familiar with the syntax and semantics of the written text, the less she needs to bring her lexical, phonological and morphological knowledge into play. Word identification is thus dependent not on prior letter identification but on the word's distinctive features. In a poorly printed text, immediate word identification can take place where there is insufficient visual evidence to identify the component letters individually. Furthermore meaning identification is not necessarily the product of the sequential identification of a proposition's component words. In Smith's view, as in Goodman's, the skilled reader's knowledge of semantic and syntactic constraints will direct her to make predictions. For Smith this means that less graphic information is needed for the identification of a meaningful sentence than for the identification of its component words presented in isolation.

But Smith claims that neither the initial nor the skilled reader

processes linguistic features at different levels simultaneously as Gibson would have us believe. For Smith this is an impossibility akin to perceiving simultaneously the old lady and the young girl in E G Boring's well known object-ambiguous picture of the mother-in-law (Boring 1942). Thus for Smith, attention to word identification or worse still, letter identification actually makes it harder for the child to identify the meaning of a sentence of written text. The child's intention should be to reduce uncertainty about some aspect of the meaning of the text and for her to shift her attention from this level to a lower one is as disturbing as to shift her attention from the form of the old lady to the young one.

Smith's analogy seems strained. The relationship between meaning, word and letter identification is not one of absolute alternatives, but of elements at different points in a hierarchy. Polanyi's concepts of focal and subsidiary awareness seem more appropriate (Polanyi 1964). In speech perception, focal awareness of meaning involves subsidiary awareness of words, morphemes and phonemes as is demonstrated by the listener's correction of the speaker's errors at these levels (Fry, 1970). In the reading process, focal awareness of meaning must involve subsidiary awareness of words and letters. But in neither process is the relationship neatly reversible. Polanyi warns:

All particulars become meaningless if we lose
sight of the pattern which they constitute.
(Polanyi 1964 p.57)

Perhaps the most powerful conception is that of Rumelhart (Rumelhart 1976). He sees reading as both a perceptual and a cognitive process, one which bridges and blurs these distinctions. Drawing an analogy with the operation of language processing

computers, he presents reading as the sum of totally independent asynchronous processes drawing on independent knowledge sources which communicate and interact by means of a highly structured message centre. Rumelhart tentatively itemises the knowledge sources as facts, letters, letter clusters, lexis, syntax and semantics. The message centre keeps a running list of hypotheses about the nature of the 'input string'. These hypotheses can be generated at the level of any of the knowledge sources and interact with others generated at higher and/or lower levels. Thus hypotheses generated syntactically interact with those generated at both the lexical and semantic levels. Reading for Rumelhart is essentially a matter of simultaneous multi-level interactive processing, neither top-down nor bottom-up but both at once, operating harmoniously until the reader makes a miscue when the hypotheses at different levels are no longer congruent.

Smith sees that reading involves attention either to one level or another. Gibson and Levin see it as a simultaneous multi-level operation without specifying how the reader relates information obtained at different levels. Rumelhart's interactive conception appears the richest and most productive.

Conceived in this way, reading is a process strikingly similar to the process of speech perception as currently presented. The phonetician D B Fry writes:

... there is compelling evidence in favour of the theory of multi-level decoding to be found in the correction of errors which goes on in speech. It is common experience of every listener that he can and does make corrections at any point in the message where the speaker makes an error. ... In one form or another they happen often enough to make it plain that in speech reception the message is built up on phoneme, morpheme, word and sentence level at the same time.

(Fry 1970 p.49)

There is an attractive symmetry about the idea that the perception of

oral and graphic language operates in fundamentally similar ways, but the theory needs the support of empirical evidence which will be examined at the end of this chapter.

4.3

The practical implications of these psycholinguistic views for initial reading

There is less controversy about the practical implications of these views than about the views themselves, since Goodman, Gibson and Levin, Smith and Rumelhart would all agree that for the teacher to draw the child's attention continually to the lexical or morpho-phonemic levels of the text would be likely to reduce the use made of the semantic and syntactic levels, and to imperil the essential process of meaning recognition or construction.

It should be noted that Smith and Gibson and Levin arrive at this view without adhering as closely to Chomsky's conceptions of deep and surface structure as does Goodman.

Smith maintains that the constraints of our short term memory limit us to handling no more than approximately seven items at one time. The smaller the items perceived, the smaller the stretch of language that can be transferred to long-term memory. If the child is trained to perceive only letters she cannot retain sufficient information to 'make sense' of what she reads. Even if the text is perceived as words, seven of these are unlikely to add up to a retainable proposition. This provides an explanation for the widespread phenomenon of beginning readers who, reading aloud in a monotone word after jerky word, are unable to paraphrase what has been 'read'.

Smith recognises that the initial reader is often not in a position to identify words immediately, let alone meanings, and has instead to proceed by a process of mediated identification, which may involve mapping the graphemes of the word onto its phonemic pattern. But to overcome the limitation of short-term memory mentioned above, she must be helped to make use of the redundancies of written language, by hypothesising at the semantic level about the text in front of her, checking her hypotheses against samples of graphic information, moving from higher to lower levels only to confirm or disconfirm the high-level predictions.

Smith is at pains to argue that the beginning reader possesses all the cognitive skills necessary for this process. In fields other than language and reading, the young child demonstrates that she can make comparisons, establish categories and rules, formulate and test hypotheses. The teacher's role is to provide the child with feedback, not by penalising her for incorrect 'guesses', but by giving her information which will assist her in the refinement of implicit rules about the systematic relationship between oral language and graphic text. These the child must develop for herself, just as she constructed the syntactic rules of oral language (F Smith 1971).

The following statement of Wells and Raban can be taken as widely representative of the psycholinguistic view of initial reading.

The implication of much recent psycholinguistic research on reading is that the main difference between reading and listening lies in the different sensory modalities employed and that what the beginning reader chiefly has to learn, therefore, is the correspondence between the two systems of representation. Hence the emphasis on reading for meaning, since it is assumed that, by concentrating on the level at which spoken and written messages are most similar, strategies developed for coping with spoken messages will help beginning readers to use cues that are already available

to them and allow them to gain the 'meaning momentum' which is essential for effective reading at any level.

(Wells and Raban 1982 p. 197)

There is less concord on the matter of the development of an effective knowledge of the phonemic/graphemic relationships that operate in our alphabetic system. On the one hand the top-down or strong version of the psycholinguistic approach presents all physically normal initial readers as capable of developing a thorough tacit knowledge of these relationships through focussing on the semantic and syntactic levels. On the other hand the simultaneous or weak version presents conscious attention, (perhaps even instruction) as beneficial, and where accompanied by an overall concern with meaning, such conscious attention to lower levels is not to be detrimental to the production of high level hypotheses.

4.4

A contrary view of the relation between language learning and reading

Before I present a summary of the arguments found convincing on a theoretical level, I would note that not all psycholinguistic theorists of the process of reading acquisition postulate such important similarities with oral language acquisition as do Goodman, Gibson and Levin, F Smith and Lefèvre. Wardhaugh sees marked differences between the two processes. In an article entitled 'Language Acquisition in Relation to Beginning Reading' he enumerates the differences as follows:

- i) oral language learning is a gradual process, with no clear beginning point, which is probably never completed, whereas reading instruction often has a sudden onset;
- ii) oral language learning is accompanied by little anxiety but reading instruction is accompanied by much anxiety, and when the child is held to be failing she is often blamed;
- iii) oral language is learnt informally and unconsciously, whereas reading instruction is formal and deliberate;

- iv) the benefits of learning to speak are obvious to children, but the benefits of learning to read are not obvious and the effort might seem wasteful.
(Wardhaugh 1971)

It must be noted that features of the process of learning to read which Wardhaugh sees to distinguish it from the process of learning oral language are more accurately characterised as products of particular teaching strategies than as inherent attributes of the process of learning to read. Indeed he more often contrasts the learning of oral language with the instruction of reading than with the learning of reading. Here again, an examination of the evidence is necessary to see whether these contrasts are universal, and therefore presumably intrinsically necessary, reflecting deep differences in the two processes, or whether evidence exists of cases where such contrasts cannot be found, permitting the conclusion that where they do exist, it is as a function of a particular set of circumstances.

4.5

Summary of the psycholinguistic view

The various behaviourist conceptions of initial reading seem inherently unsatisfactory in their limited view of human learning and of relevant linguistic knowledge. The psycholinguistic view seems to give a more adequate theoretical account, but this needs to be tested against relevant ^{empirical} ~~theoretical~~ evidence.

In order to do this I will first summarise the psycholinguistic view of early reading, then derive five key hypotheses which will be tested against relevant empirical evidence in the next section.

To summarise: Gibson and Levin, and Smith postulate important similarities between oral language acquisition and reading

acquisition, in that both processes are seen as active theory building. In the acquisition of oral language, it is through this theory building that linguistic knowledge is developed. Provided that the child is given feedback and not prevented from constructing and testing hypotheses, this knowledge of language is then drawn on as she constructs her increasingly complex and comprehensive theory of the relationship of spoken to written language. In the light of recent findings in cognitive psychology referred to, this theory seems to provide a plausible and attractive account of the process of learning to read. By stressing the importance of allowing the child to 'guess' and providing the child with appropriate feedback it permits us also to explain the failure of many children to learn to read, which we can lay at the door of inappropriate teaching, at home and at school. However this theory must be examined against the empirical evidence presented at the end of this chapter. Furthermore, it should be noted that the controversy between Rumelhart and Gibson and Levin on the one hand, and Smith on the other as to whether the child uses information from different levels of language simultaneously can also be settled only by an examination of relevant evidence.

If reading is taken as a process in which, from a graphic text, the reader constructs meaning of a literal, affective, inferential or evaluative nature, then the following propositions concerning the relation of the child's knowledge of language to the process of reading acquisition have been found sufficiently convincing on a theoretical level to warrant examination against empirical evidence of children learning to read.

- (1) In general terms competence in oral language facilitates acquisition of reading.

- (2) In her early attempts at reading the child is aided by drawing on her tacit phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, semantic and intonational knowledge.
- (3) The child makes active use of this tacit knowledge to construe the text immediately in front of her.
- (4) Largely by herself the child develops an increasingly complex and refined theory concerning the relationship between the graphic and the morpho-phonemic systems.

Derived from the first four, the fifth proposition reveals the radical nature of the psycholinguistic view of early reading and the revolutionary nature of its implications for classroom practice.

- (5) Initial reading does not inevitably differ from oral language development in any fundamental sense. It is possible for there to be a strongly felt need to learn to read, for the process to begin gradually, to be accompanied by little anxiety and to take place unconsciously and informally.

5

Empirical evidence

5.1

Evidence on the first hypothesis

The existence of a general relationship was established by Loban in 1963 when he published a report of his survey of the language used by 338 children followed from Kindergarten to sixth grade (Loban 1963). The study assessed the children's use and control of oral language, their effectiveness in communication and, for grades four to six, the relations between proficiency in listening, reading, oral

language and written language.

Assessment of the children's oral language was achieved by a combination of lexical, syntactic and stylistic measures. Lexically the language was scored for the presence of words of high and low frequency and also for the diversity of words used by the speaker. Syntactically it was scored for the presence of linguistic 'mazes' (tangled utterances apparently abandoned by the speaker) and for the degree of subordination. The stylistic measures are rather vaguely termed as fluency, coherence and maturity.

High and low scorers on these measures were then rated for their use of rather vaguely conceived functions. In grades four to six (but not earlier) they were also rated for their success in reading. For Loban the findings establish a clear connection:

... those who are proficient in oral language are also
those who are superior in reading achievement.
(Loban 1963 p.55)

One can conclude from this finding that either skilled reading contributes to oral language learning or that oral language contributes to the learning of reading, certainly in the intermediate stages. Or perhaps the influence goes both ways.

Rodgers, Slade and Conry have compared the oral language and reading ability of first grade Canadian children (Rodgers, Slade and Conry 1974). The measures of oral language concern lexis, fluency (in terms of the number of words used by the child to describe a picture or retell a story), word definition and the use of connectives. All measures differentiate between groups of the children categorised according to achievement in reading. However it is worth noting for future stages in the argument, that the poorest differentiator is the definition test and the sharpest the test of fluency arrived at by

counting the number of words produced in retelling a story.

From his longitudinal study of Bristol children Wells reports attainment in literacy to be more highly correlated with measures of oral comprehension than with measures of oral production (Wells 1978b).

In their re-evaluation of 89 studies culled from conference proceedings and journal articles between 1950 and 1978, Hammill and McNutt also find that reading correlates more highly with listening comprehension than with 'meaningful speaking' (Hammill and McNutt 1980). However this correlation is only .39 and is exceeded by a correlation of reading with 'meaningful writing' of .61, leading them to conclude

from this review of the research it would appear that methods of teaching reading that emphasize written language would be more effective than methods that emphasize oral language.

(Hammill and McNutt 1980 p. 273)

This points to an area of weakness in psycholinguistic theory, examined in detail in Chapter 3.

Again this finding indicates a general connection between proficiency in oral language (albeit receptive) and proficiency in reading acquisition rather than establishing the precise nature of the connection. However other studies have shown particular levels of linguistic knowledge at work.

5.2

Evidence on the second hypothesis

Since this hypothesis concerns the use of linguistic information of different kinds, it is not so straightforwardly supported or refuted in toto by single research findings. I have therefore divided the relevant findings into sections.

5.2.1

Evidence on connections at the lexical, syntactic and semantic level in adult reading

A century ago Cattell established that a printed word is perceived more quickly than an equivalent set of randomly ordered letters and a meaningful sentence is perceived more quickly than an equivalent set of randomly ordered words (Cattell 1886). This finding was established with skilled adult readers, and it could be argued that lexical, syntactic and semantic knowledge are only brought into play after a child has progressed through the early stages of reading. All the following evidence, therefore, concerns initial readers.

5.2.2

Evidence on connections at the lexical level

These are perhaps the easiest to establish. Cantor finds that children made familiar orally with words in their pre-primers exceed control groups on tests of reading readiness and on reading achievement in first grade (Cantor 1935).

5.2.3

Evidence on connections at the levels of sentence syntax and semantics

Goodman has established that children recognise words more easily in running text containing familiar meanings and sentence structures than in arbitrarily ordered word lists (Goodman 1965).

The use made of the child's semantic and syntactic knowledge has been further demonstrated in many studies using Goodman's technique of miscue analysis, in which the child's oral mis-readings are examined for their semantic and syntactic appropriateness as well as for the

use made of the grapho-phonemic information (Allen 1976).

From a study of first graders' miscues, Weber notes that words were not identified without reference to their preceding syntactic constraints, and ungrammatical miscues were more often corrected by the child than were grammatical miscues (Weber 1970). Perhaps most interestingly in view of Chomsky's observations on the presumed uniqueness of the process of language acquisition, weaker readers did not differ from their more skilled classmates in respect of their use of grammar. She concludes that:

... all children bring to the task a fundamental linguistic ability which in its rigidity shapes their reading responses into familiar language structures.
(Weber 1970 p.449)

However Y Goodman, also working with first graders, in an intensive study of six children over eleven months, found wide individual differences (Y Goodman 1976). In general the more proficient children showed more complex processing and more ability to correct errors when these conflicted with their expectations of the text. She also observes that from the beginning of their reading instruction in school, all subjects made use of three cuing systems: syntactic, semantic and grapho-phonemic.

Clay has also worked extensively with children in their first year at school. Her interpretation of her results is more cautious than those of Weber and Y Goodman (Clay 1967). She stresses that they are tied to the particular situation in which they were obtained and might therefore not be widely generalisable. She concludes one study with the observation that for the particular group of New Zealand five year olds concerned, taught to read by an approach stressing fluency, meaning and 'learning as one reads' with only slight attention to grapho-phonemic information, the findings from test results on a wide

variety of measures give support to the view that initial readers are heavily dependent on oral language skills, especially on an awareness of what is possible and likely to occur in the language. This awareness seems to include semantic as well as syntactic considerations.

The part played by syntax and semantics is further emphasised by studies of children who have on various measures, failed to learn to read. Using the term 'dyslexic' to characterise those scoring one standard deviation or more below the mean on two measures of reading comprehension, Vogel compares 20 normal and 20 dyslexic boys in the second grade (Vogel 1975). He finds marked differences in terms of syntactic abilities between the two groups. Approximately 90% of the dyslexic boys displayed syntactic deficiencies in their expressive oral language. Vogel concludes that attention to syntactic growth and development should be a part of reading readiness programmes for all children.

5.2.4

Evidence on connections at syntactic and phonemic levels

Ruddell examines children's use of their phonemic as well as syntactic knowledge in reading acquisition using a classical experimental technique (Ruddell 1968). Having split 24 first grade classes into four cells on the two variables of regularity of grapho-phonemic correspondences and regularity of sentence structure in the texts presented to them, he finds that the children enrolled in the programme featuring consistency on both variables, produced significantly higher scores in comprehension of sentences and paragraphs than those in the other three conditions. The children in

the programme featuring consistency in sentence structure alone, did not achieve comprehension scores significantly superior to the other two conditions. Ruddell concludes that achievement in comprehension is a function of the control which subjects exhibit over aspects of the phonological system and the syntactic system at the beginning of grade one.

Two observations should be made here. The first is that the texts with syntactic regularity were not based on syntactic structures used by the children in their oral language. Indeed the arbitrarily chosen structures were presented in systematic progressions involving substitutions and expansions that removed them even further from the probable pattern of the children's language.

The second point is that in contrast to the work of Y Goodman, Clay and Weber cited above, Ruddell presents the syntactic system as if it were virtually autonomous. Not even an oblique reference is made to the child's semantic system which seems particularly bizarre when he takes comprehension as the criterion of ^{full} ~~succession~~ reading acquisition. Consequently the findings of this study cannot be taken to detract from the weight of evidence pointing to the part played by syntax and semantics in early reading.

5.2.5

Evidence on connections at the level of intonation

Investigators using the miscue analysis technique have noted that changes in intonation are involved in almost all miscues (Gutknecht 1976). Such intonation changes have been held to be the cause rather than the result of many miscues, although the evidence for this has not, perhaps, been sufficiently systematically collected or examined.

5.3

Evidence on the third hypothesis

All the above-mentioned miscue studies show the initial reader to be construing the text in front of her, to some extent. Y Goodman's study (op.cit.), in particular shows the more successful initial reader to be making active attempts to correct miscues which result in a loss of coherent meaning at or above the level of the sentence.

5.4

Evidence on the fourth hypothesis

It is not quite so easy to show a similarly active participation on the part of the learner in developing and refining a theory concerning the relationship between the graphic and the morpho-phonemic systems. F Smith (1971) cites the work of Berdiansky, Cronell and Koehler (1969) who analyse the 6,092 one and two syllable words among 9,000 different words within the comprehension vocabulary of children and from 6 to 9 years. They discover that these words involve 211 grapho/morpho-phonemic correspondences, which they classify as 166 rules and 45 exceptions. One can agree with Smith's observation that this shows 'phonics' to be a far more complicated matter than proponents of phonic teaching methods claim. However to show the rules (and exceptions) operating in the text is not to show that the child readers had mastered these. Since the words were taken from apparently meaningful running text, rather than from lists of words recognised in isolation, one cannot be sure that the children who successfully recognised the words were doing so by using a complex theory to interpret the graphic information, or whether they were supplementing limited knowledge in this area by the use of other

levels of linguistic information, as shown in the miscue research cited above. Certainly readers do develop the ability to decode words exhibited in isolation, that exemplify complex rules, but how far this ability lags behind the ability to recognise the same words in a meaningful context, has not been clearly established. Nor has it been established whether such an ability is the product of conscious application of explicit rules or of unconscious appreciation of implicit rules arrived at as the child makes inferences on the basis of information received.

However studies of spontaneous readers indicate that in some cases at least, most of such learning is achieved in this manner (Durkin 1966 Torrey 1973, Clark 1976).

5.5

Evidence on the fifth hypothesis

These above-mentioned studies of Durkin, Torrey and Clark also provide evidence to support the wider fifth proposition.

Torrey gives a detailed account of a black five-year old truck driver's son in Atlanta Georgia who taught himself to read, apparently by inferring the relationship between oral language and print on TV commercials, then applying his developing theory first to the labels on the contents of the family food cupboards and then to his older siblings' school texts.

That Torrey's is not an isolated case is demonstrated by two studies carried out by Durkin (op.cit.). In Oakland, California she found out that of 5103 children in their first week of first grade, 49 children had already learnt to read, some to fifth grade level. In New York City the figure was 157 out of 5000. These children had

learnt despite a climate in which parents felt anxious about the supposedly harmful effects of such early learning.

It is clear that there is a wide range of achievement in reading. It cannot be said of reading as it can of oral language acquisition, that after three or four years all normal children have developed a complex and powerful theory that permits them to produce and interpret written language. But the existence of a number of cases where learning has apparently taken place spontaneously, informally, unconsciously and without anxiety shows that Wardhaugh's characterisation of reading acquisition as markedly different from oral language development, is more likely to be a function of particular cultural practices than an inherent attribute of the process.

5.6

Summary and conclusions concerning evidence on the five hypotheses derived from the psycholinguistic view of initial reading

The evidence examined has been shown to support in varying degrees, the five propositions concerning the relation between the child's knowledge of language and the process of learning to read. The first three hypotheses are strongly supported and the fourth seems indicated, but awaits clearer evidence, it is the fifth proposition that appears most in need of qualification, in the light of available evidence. It should be amended by the insertion of the phrase "For certain children in certain circumstances" at the beginning of the second sentence, so that it reads:

- (5) Initial reading does not inevitably differ from oral language development in any fundamental sense. For certain children in certain circumstances it is possible for there to be a strongly felt need to learn to read, for the process to begin gradually, to be accompanied by little anxiety and to take place unconsciously and informally.

6

Inadequacies in the psycholinguistic approach to initial reading

The evidence examined so far indicates that with the qualification stated above, the psycholinguistic school provides a valid account of the relation between knowledge of language and reading. However this account is not sufficient. There remain further sets of evidence which the psycholinguistic view does not explain.

6.1

Phonological awareness

The studies examined so far are all concerned with the child's tacit knowledge of oral language. The case histories of 'spontaneous' readers suggest that in some cases at least, tacit knowledge of language is not only a necessary condition, but also apparently a sufficient linguistic conditions for the child to embark successfully on the process of learning to read. However other research indicates that for most children in most classrooms conscious conceptualisation of the word as a sequence of phonemes, can play a beneficial part in this process. Liberman et al. demonstrate a high correlation between success in word segmentation at five years and subsequent success in reading (Liberman, Shankweiler, Liberman, Fowler and Fisher 1976).

Venezky, Shiloah and Calfee show success in rhyming to correlate significantly with scores on reading achievement at the end of first grade (Venezky, Shiloah and Calfee 1972).

In an elaborate piece of research combining a longitudinal observational study and an experimental study in which a subsample of the first group was given intensive training in phonemic categorisation, Bradley and Bryant find a causal connection between children's ability to categorise sounds and their success in learning to read (Bradley and Bryant 1983).

These findings are not accounted for by the reading theories of Smith or Goodman, but seem to support the position of Rumelhart and Gibson and Levin in their claim that:

Any system of writing with a phonetic basis, whether syllabic or alphabetic, demands some perceptual analysis of the speech stream in order to match it to the written code.
(Gibson and Levin 1975p.228)

6.2

Familiarity with the meta-language of reading

In a group of studies which will be more fully explored later in the argument, Reid, Downing and Francis looking individually at the five year-old's conceptualisation of the reading process, have all found that many children of this age fail to recognise instances of the terms 'sentence', 'word', 'letter' or 'sound' and that such failure is correlated with slowness in learning to read (Reid 1966, Downing 1969, Francis 1973). They conclude that since this meta-language is heavily used by the teacher, failure to interpret it may well be a contributory cause to delay in learning to read. More recently Torrance and Olson have shown that six year olds' competence with meta-cognitive terms such as 'mean', 'know' and 'wonder' is

strongly related to their acquisition of literacy skills (Torrance and Olson 1985).

6.3

The child's motivation to learn to read

Paradoxically, the psycholinguistic school, with its emphasis on reading for meaning, has paid little attention to such semantic matters as the larger meanings of the texts offered to the child and why the child should feel motivated to learn to read. Why should the child who has developed a range of competences in oral language feel any need to develop a further communicative system?

Proponents of the psycholinguistic view take the child's desire to make meaning of the text in front of her as axiomatic, as part of what makes us all human. They imply that if a child is physically and mentally normal, all that is required for her to achieve success in learning to read is for her to be given texts well matched to her linguistic competence at the levels previously indicated and for the teacher to encourage her to 'guess' and to provide her with sufficient feedback of a kind that will direct her attention to the meaning in the text. But can all failure in learning to read (apart from that attributable to gross perceptual or mental deficiencies) be laid at the door of inadequate language in the child, inappropriate texts or teaching strategies that divert the child from the business of making sense of the text?

This narrowly cognitive view of the task of learning to read seems a legacy of Chomsky's views on language learning. Chomsky's conception of the child as innately predisposed to engage in linguistic activity for its own sake has coloured subsequent work on

oral language acquisition in the United States, and similarly affected work on initial reading. Thus it is not surprising that psycholinguistic theory fails to address the question of why children should prefer some books to others with similar syntactic structures and similar semantics at and below the level of the sentence.

6.4

Initial reading as a sociolinguistic activity

The psycholinguistic school does not address the problem of the differential attainment in reading between children of different social groups. Here again it is their narrowly cognitive approach that prevents them from conceptualising very real differences.

Language development and initial reading are not simply psycholinguistic processes, they are also sociolinguistic processes. We need to look at them in the context of the child's relations with those around her. Halliday has shown us that the child's developing meanings have both an interpersonal and an ideational content (Halliday 1975). In his representation of linguistic form as the realization of a multi-valent semantic function, Halliday provides us with an understanding of the dynamic behind language learning that is missing from Chomsky's work. We learn language in order to engage in meaningful interaction with those around us and we achieve this learning by engaging in such interaction. Chapter Two explores how such a sociolinguistic view can enrich our understanding of the relationship between language and reading.

Differences between spoken and written language

There is one further serious weakness in psycholinguistic theory, namely an assumption that the differences between the child's oral language and the language of written text are sufficiently trivial as to cause no barrier to the child's identification of meaning, or can be made so. N B Smith, an early exponent of the contribution of the child's linguistic knowledge to reading acquisition, makes this assumption explicit.

Regardless of whether we speak, listen, write or read,
we draw our word coins from the same bank ... The same
structural patterns of sentences are used in all forms of
language expression.

(N B Smith 1963 p.7)

This assumption already called into question by the findings of Hammill and McNutt, is examined in detail in Chapter 3.

7

Summary

In summary, an examination of theoretical and empirical work on initial reading has shown the positive contribution of the initial reader's knowledge of language at the phonemic, morphemic, lexical, syntactic, semantic and intonational levels. It has shown that the child makes active use of such knowledge to construe the text in front of her and indicated that she seems to develop for herself an increasing complex and refined theory concerning the relationship between the graphic and the morpho-phonemic systems. It has also ~~been~~ shown that the important differences that exist between the processes of oral language acquisition and reading acquisition, are not inevitable.

Empirical work has also indicated that conscious knowledge of word segmentation can contribute to success in learning to read and that there is a correlation between such success and the child's ability to understand the reference of certain meta-linguistic terms.

The work examined so far has not satisfactorily explained why any child should want to learn to read, why some texts should be easier than others of apparently similar syntax and semantics, nor why there should be wide variations in success in learning to read between children with apparently similar linguistic skill and subject to similar instruction. Furthermore there is a pervasive assumption that the language of texts written for children to read need not be significantly dissimilar from their oral language. The next four chapters throw light on these problems, and set the scene for an examination of the child's experience of hearing stories read aloud.

CHAPTER TWO

Sociolinguistic Factors Affecting the Process of Initial Reading

1

Introduction

The psycholinguistic theorists of initial reading whose work I examined in the first chapter, are concerned to learn from the successful attacks on initial reading typical of large numbers of children. The study of successful initial readers has vastly enhanced our understanding of the linguistic contribution to this process. But of course not all children succeed with such ease.

Success and failure in reading are closely related to social class. It has long been recognised that different social groups have differential success in the education system in general, and in reading in particular. As part of the National Child Development Study in this country, the reading proficiency of 11000 seven year olds was tested on the Southgate Word Recognition Test, a test of admittedly rather limited validity in terms of reading meaningful text. In the light of the resulting information, the children were grouped into three categories - good, medium and poor readers. The percentage of children in social classes 4 and 5 consequently classified as poor readers, was nearly four times that of children in social classes 1 and 2 (Kellmer-Pringle 1966). Many other surveys have produced broadly similar results, well summarised by Morrison and McIntyre (1971).

There have been a number of attempts to identify a linguistic mechanism which relates this educational failure to its supposed origin in social class. This chapter will explore these attempts.

They range from those that leave undisturbed the framework of mainstream psycholinguistic theory and deal with dialect difference and grammatical deficit, to those that go beyond the mainstream psycholinguistic framework to include a consideration of language in terms of function as well as in terms of its formal characteristics.

Before I proceed further I should note two points that make this a difficult area to examine. The first point is that issues concerned with dialect, particularly in connection to education, are highly emotive. Dialect is a badge of belonging to a particular social group and thus carries with it associations which derive from features of the group rather than of the dialect itself. Notions of 'correctness' and the aesthetic quality of a dialect are imbued with notions about the social status and attractiveness of its speakers. I should emphasise that in taking Standard British English as the norm for speakers of English in this country, I am making a social, not a linguistic decision and do not intend that this should be taken to imply that non-standard dialects are less grammatical or aesthetically pleasing.

The second point of difficulty is that much work in this area, an area which represents the intersection between linguistics and sociology, is complicated by contrasting terminology and inconsistent classification. To disentangle this confusion would be a major work not appropriately undertaken in the course of an argument more concerned with linguistics than with sociology. Consequently, at the risk of presenting a simplistic picture, the terms 'lower class' and 'middle class' are used here to the exclusion of most others. They refer, at least where British work is concerned, to social classes 4 and 5 on the one hand, and social classes 1 and 2 on the other.

Dialect difference

Dialect (here taken to include accent) has received considerable attention as a possible source of explanation of the comparative failure of the lower class child to learn to read. In both England and the United States the speech of the lower class child is likely to be further removed from standard forms (either Standard American English, SAE or Standard British English, SBE) than is the speech of the middle class child. These differences operate chiefly at the level of phonology and syntax. The deviations of Black Vernacular American (BVA) from SAE have been delineated in detail by Wolfram and those of various non-standard English dialects by Wakelin (Wolfram 1969, Wakelin 1972).

It is argued by Shuy and V Edwards among others, that the phonological, lexical and syntactic knowledge brought to school by the speakers of such dialects, poses serious problems for the process of learning to read. These problems are held to operate at many levels (Shuy 1973 V Edwards 1976).

2.1

Phonological deviations from Standard English

At the phonological level, divergences from the standard are held to make it harder for the child to establish a system of phonemic/graphemic correspondences. But this is not a simple matter. It should be recognised that some non-standard British dialects make distinctions which are reflected in the spelling system although absent from SBE pronunciation. 'Caught' and 'court' in the Edinburgh dialect and 'moan' and 'mown' in the East Anglian dialect are cases in

point. However it does seem that for most of the non-standard British dialects, the majority of phonological deviations from SBE operate in the other direction, thus making the phonemic/graphemic relationship between written English and most non-standard British dialects more complicated than that between written English and SBE (Trudgill 1975).

But the evidence does not provide unequivocal support for the hypothesis that this increased complexity of phoneme/grapheme correspondence operates to the significant disadvantage of the initial reader. In a study of the relation between non-standard dialect and reading failure among B.V.A. speakers, Labov concludes that none of the phonological differences could be regarded as primary causes of reading failure (Labov 1967). In this country V Edwards comes to a different conclusion after studying West Indian dialects and relating their deviations from SBE to the failure of children of West Indian origin to comprehend texts they have 'read' aloud, as well as do their non-West Indian classmates with similar reading accuracy scores (V Edwards 1976). She itemises phonological features common to the various WI dialects (together with lexical and syntactic features) and indicates numerous potential ambiguities, relating these to the children's recorded comprehension failures. However Wight sees the dialect difference explanation as inadequate, noting that nearly all British children of WI origin are bi-dialectal, opting overwhelmingly in their formal speech and writing in school for the grammatical forms of SBE, which he argues indicates at least a receptive control over the phonological and syntactic forms of SBE (Wight 1976). His own tentative explanation lies in the teacher's conception of reading and reaction to dialect difference. This is explored after the possible impact of other levels of dialect difference has been examined.

2.2

Syntactic deviations from Standard English

It is also claimed, as indicated above, that dialect differences of a syntactic kind operate to the disadvantage of the non-standard dialect speaker, by making it harder for her to confirm the predictions which the psycholinguistic school has shown us to play an essential part in reading for meaning at all stages. 'Peter ain't got no ball' may be the Cockney version of the written text 'Peter has not got a ball', but consequent conflicts at the lexical and grapho-phonemic levels may cause the reader to discard this prediction. Again there is no clear evidence that such syntactic differences present real problems. Labov (op.cit.) concludes that they do not, V Edwards (op.cit.) concludes that they do, but is criticised by Wight (op.cit.) on the grounds previously indicated. There is, however, some evidence that young non-standard dialect speakers are capable of recoding the standard forms of written texts into parallel forms in their own dialect (Shuy 1973, Torrey 1973). Whether the complexity of such a recoding process exceeds that carried out by the S.A.E. speaker to the extent that it leads to an increase in semantic and syntactic miscues, is not clear.

2.3

The use of non-standard dialect texts in initial reading

Assuming such problems to exist, linguists such as Olsen and Lefèvre have for some time advocated presenting the initial reader with texts in her own dialect (Olsen 1968, Lefèvre 1968). Lefèvre states:

... the child should first learn to read and write
the language and the dialect he speaks when he comes

to school with no more than minimal attempts to correct it or purify it; his idiolect is his most direct bridge to literacy.

(Lefèvre 1968 p.299)

But empirical evidence does not unequivocally support the view that to present the initial reader with texts in her own dialect serves to remove substantial barriers to reading in terms of accuracy or of comprehension. Walker has investigated dialect interference in the reading of third grade Newfoundland children with particular reference to the grammatical structures of the Newfoundland dialect (Walker 1975). Surprisingly, when presented with texts in SAE and the local dialect, the children made significantly more miscues with the local versions than with the SAE versions. However it could be argued that these children were already habituated to reading texts in SAE

Sims carried out a similar investigation with second grade children speaking BVA (Sims 1976). Her findings are similar to Walker's but more detailed in that the miscues made by the children are analysed in terms of their dialectal status. Sims finds that the miscues these children made on SAE texts shifted them towards BVA, as one would expect from the work of Shuy (op.cit.) and Torrey (op.cit.) However she finds in addition that not only did the children make a greater number of miscues on the BVA texts than on the SAE texts, but also that the miscues they made on the BVA texts, shifted them towards SAE. She observed that in reading aloud the children adopted a special oral style closer to SAE than to the BVA they used when they retold the stories in their own words. The conclusion is drawn that these children have demonstrated that they possess "at minimum a receptive control of SAE". This bears out Wight's observations cited above. One might add that they seem to regard SAE as a more appropriate dialect than BVA for texts to be read in school. Certainly it demonstrates

the fallacy of assessing children's receptive competence on the basis of their productive performance.

2.4

The teacher's attitude to non-standard dialect

It has been suggested that reading problems related to dialect difference may originate more from the teacher's attitude to the non-standard dialect and her conception of the reading process than from any inherent mismatch between oral language and written text. Wight (op.cit.) notes that an emphasis placed on word for word accuracy in reading aloud with or without insistence on standard pronunciation, can have a deleterious effect on the reader's comprehension. The child urged by the teacher to read in this way is driven to place heavy emphasis on graphic information at the expense of semantic and syntactic prediction. Word for word accuracy then leads to word by word reading with a consequent loss in meaning as Gibson and Levin, K Goodman and Smith have all indicated (K Goodman 1968, Smith 1971, Gibson and Levin 1975). Indeed Goodman himself advances precisely this explanation in an article entitled 'Dialect barriers to reading comprehension revisited'. (K Goodman 1973). It seems likely that this is a more real source of reading problems than inherent linguistic differences.

2.5

Summary and discussion

In a study that will be explored in some detail at a later stage, Wells has shown failure in initial reading to be less strongly correlated with strength of non-standard dialect than with other

language-related variables (Wells 1981b).

The idea that dialect difference constitutes a significant barrier preventing the lower-class child from learning to read, is not only weakened by lack of empirical evidence but also by two fundamental assumptions. Firstly with the mainstream psycholinguistic view of reading, it shares the assumption that the language of written texts is oral language written down. Secondly it depends on a sociolinguistic assumption that language differences between social groups are essentially dialect differences, and thus characterised principally in terms of syntax, lexis and phonology.

3

Oral language deficit

This second assumption is strongly challenged by various proponents of ^{the} language deficit^{explanation}, who claim that the language the lower class child brings to school is fundamentally inadequate as a vehicle for facilitating learning in school in ways that cannot be characterised as features of dialect. Such theories have been advanced to explain class-related differences in school achievement generally, rather than differences in reading in particular, but they should be examined for their relevance to the reading problem.

Of course not all writers characterise class-related language deficit in the same way. A broad distinction can be drawn between two conceptions of language deficit. On the one hand there are those who see the language of lower-class children as lagging behind that of their middle-class age-mates predominantly in terms of lexis and syntax. On the other, there are those who see limitations on the language of lower-class children, not in terms of deficiencies in the

formal linguistic repertoire which the children possess, but in the functional uses to which this repertoire is habitually put.

3.1

Studies of deficit in terms of lexis and syntax

3.1.1

Findings concerning lexical and syntactic deficit

Most of the American workers on this question have conceived language deficit in the first manner, that is as a maturational lag which, like lags in school achievement, becomes wider as the children grow older. In the study already cited, Loban has assessed children's language using the combination of lexical, syntactic and stylistic measures outlined in the first chapter. He reports:

a persistently parallel variation between
language proficiency and socio-economic status.
(Loban 1963 p.89)

But on close examination of his work these differences are found to be confined in oral language to differences in the degree of subordination employed and the absence of verb inflections amongst Southern Blacks. In written language, the class differences reported are quite unspecified.

Other studies have been more specific. Many claim to reveal limitations in active vocabulary in the oral language of lower class children (Templin 1957, Deutsch 1965). Others claim to find deficiencies in syntax. Raph reports that lower class children produced short sentences made up of a single simple clause, or a number of simple clauses linked by such weak conjunctions as 'then' and 'and' (Raph 1967). Bereiter and Engelman report on an elaborate

programme to teach inner-city Black pre-school children to produce the complete sentences which they are held to be unable to construct without such drastic action (Bereiter and Engelmann 1966).

3.1.2

Criticisms of these findings

However such studies have not generally been regarded as providing irrefutable evidence (or even reasonably clear indications) of real deficiencies. Such findings are typically the product of situations in which middle class investigators speaking a dialect which approximates closely to the standard, interrogate children individually in an institutional environment. Labov shows how the language of young blacks in New York became dramatically richer when the interviewer was a black BVA speaker who talked with a group on their own ground, over shared potato chips (Labov 1969).

Furthermore, the judgements of the investigator may be vitiated by linguistic naiveté. Bereiter and Engelman (op.cit.) judged their subjects to be incapable of producing complete sentences on the evidence of answers to questions posed. But in response to a question, a complete sentence of the SPCA type is not usually seen as necessary: what Crystal and Davy term a minor sentence is in many cases functionally adequate (Crystal and Davy 1969).

Other supposed syntactic deficiencies disappear when the child's language is examined in terms of the rules of the dialect she is using rather than the rules of the standard dialect. If this procedure is adopted, the deficiencies found by Loban in the syntax of Southern Black subjects, disappear completely.

Were it demonstrated that lower class children possess language

inferior to that of their middle class contemporaries, in terms of lexis and syntax, this would provide at least a partial explanation for their comparative lack of success in learning to read. But for the reasons stated above, it is by no means clear that such a connection has been established.

3.2

American work on functional deficit

However, not all American investigators see language deficit solely as a matter of lexis and syntax. The deficiencies Bereiter and Engleman (op. cit.) note in these areas (and these findings are also subject to the reservations made above) they hold to be less significant than the ways in which 'disadvantaged' children use language. The term 'disadvantaged' is vague and their linguistic evidence not systematically presented, but they conclude:

many disadvantaged children of pre-school age
come very close to the total lack of ability
to use language as a device for acquiring and
processing information.

(Bereiter & Engelman 1966 p.39)

Their lack of clearly presented evidence makes their case unconvincing, and it is further weakened by their failure to analyse the language of their black subjects in terms of the children's own dialect.

3.3

Bernstein's work on class-related functional differences

In Britain, Bernstein has been foremost in seeking a linguistic connection between social class and educational failure. Whereas his early work shows similarities with the American work cited earlier in

postulating differences between the language used by different social groups in terms of syntactic and lexical complexity, his later work is concerned instead with the different uses to which language is habitually put (Bernstein 1959, 1971).

3.3.1

Bernstein's theory of language codes

This focus on the uses to which language is habitually put can, in part at least, be attributed to the work of Halliday to whom Bernstein acknowledges a significant debt. As I state in Chapter 1 Halliday conceives the learning of language as a social process in which the child is

... Learning the uses of language, and the meanings,
or rather the meaning potential, associated with them.
(Halliday 1973 p.345)

Bernstein develops this view of language as a complex system of meaning potential arguing that the language of the middle class child is oriented towards expressing a range of meanings, serving a class of functions not served by the language of the lower class child (Bernstein 1971). He characterises the differences as differences in code, maintaining that the lower class child has access only to a restricted code, whereas the middle class child has access to an elaborated code also. While insisting that the language of the lower class functions as a most effective instrument in the social situations in which its speakers habitually find themselves in their adult lives, Bernstein argues that the restricted code which he maintains characterises such language, effectively prevents the lower class child from gaining access to school knowledge as easily as her

middle class school-mates.

The claim that the restricted code denies its speakers full access to the benefits of education, permits the characterisation of the theory as a language deficit theory, although Bernstein himself has often denied making any contribution to deficit theory. Certainly in all but his earliest work, he is concerned with matters other than straightforward syntactic or lexical deficiencies. But if language is conceived in functional rather than merely formal terms, and language development as concerned with developing a wider functional repertoire as well as a wider formal repertoire, then Bernstein's is surely a theory of deficit.

According to Bernstein, the restricted code is a language of implicit meaning, marked by such features as rigid predictability, lack of verbalisation of intent, restriction to a particularistic order of meaning, dependence on the non-verbal context and the use of metaphor and condensed symbols rather than rationality. The lower class speaker is held to have access to this code alone, whereas the middle class speaker has access also to the elaborated code, a language of explicit meaning, marked by flexible unpredictability, verbalisation of intent, orientation to a universalistic order of meaning, independence from context and which proceeds by the use of rationality.

More recently Bernstein has moved away from a definition of code in terms of general linguistic indices, viewing it instead as

a regulative principle, tacitly acquired,
which selects and integrates relevant
meanings, forms of realizations and
evoking contexts.

(Bernstein forthcoming p. 13)

The difference between middle and lower class children

is not a difference in cognitive
facility/power but a difference
in recognition and realization
rules used by children to read
the context, select their
interactional practice and
create their texts

(Bernstein forthcoming p. 18)

For lower class children such recognition and realization rules operate in ways that lead to the selection of contextually dependent forms and meanings, thus denying them equal access with their middle class fellows to the meanings of the classroom and its texts.

This change in definition of code leaves unaffected the notion of differential access to the language of the classroom and therefore the significance of code as an explanation of class-related reading retardation.

3.3.2

The relevance of this theory to class-related reading retardation

Certainly the limitations of the restricted code, particularly its dependence on the non-verbal context, would seem to provide a plausible contribution to a linguistic explanation of class-related reading difficulty. If it could be shown that the teacher's language and the language which children are expected to read in their reading books at school were closer to the elaborated code than to the restricted code, then those children who do not have access to the elaborated code must clearly be at a disadvantage.

3.3.3

Criticisms of Bernstein's work

However Bernstein has been widely and heavily criticised.

Firstly, the empirical evidence supporting his theory is held to be weak and obtained in the kind of conditions which Labov has shown to be severely limiting (A D Edwards 1976). Secondly his theory is held to be based on an inadequate concept of social class and to present

... a stereo-typed view of working-class life
in general and its language in particular.
(Rosen 72 p.13)

Thirdly it is held to polarise in such a way as to seriously distort both social class membership of the population at large and also the use of language by different social groups, both of which are seen to be more a matter of gradual variation along an extensive continuum rather than sharp differentiation into opposing camps (Wells 1981a). What has not been attacked is the conceptual foundation provided by Halliday, of language learning as embedded in the processes of social interaction.

3.4

Tough's work on functional deficit

3.4.1

Tough's findings

Tough also has looked at the uses to which language is put by children from different social groups (Tough 1977). She analyses the language produced by children of nursery class age in a play situation set up in school. The children are from two sharply contrasting backgrounds in terms of parental occupation - professional on the one hand and semi-skilled on the other. The children's language is analysed not in terms of contrasting codes, but in terms of the relative frequency with which the two groups used language to fulfil

what Tough holds to be its main functions in children of this age. These she itemises as self-maintaining, directive, interpretive and projective, subdividing each category on a scale of apparent complexity. She finds sharp differences between the habitual uses of the two groups, with very little overlap. The children of professional parents made greater use of the interpretive and projective functions, and within these functions tended towards more complex utterances than did the children of the manual workers.

3.4.2

Criticisms of these findings

It might be argued that the language both of early reading texts and of the children's teachers is likely to make use of the interpretive and projective functions as Tough defines them, and that consequently her findings could contribute to a linguistic explanation of the relative failure of lower class children to learn to read. However her conclusions, like those of Bernstein, have been seriously questioned. Her linguistic evidence is collected in one situation only, a situation constructed expressly for the researcher's purpose, in which two children play with toys under the eye of a note-taking observer.

In treating his own study as a partial replication of this study, but with children drawn from a wider range of socio-economic backgrounds whose language was recorded in natural settings by means of radio microphones, Wells obtains rather different data (Wells 1979a). Firstly, since so few utterances can be classed as representing the interpretive and projective functions of language held by Tough to be so important, no statistical significance can be

attached to differences between groups on this score. Secondly, there are few linear trends of straightforward correlation, and of those few that do appear, some are in the reverse direction from that found by Tough. So it seems that Tough's evidence cannot be regarded as giving a clear indication that the oral language of lower class children is markedly inferior in terms of function to that of middle class children, and thus operates to deny them equal access to school learning in general or to reading in particular.

3.5

Wells' work on oral language development in children from different social classes

3.5.1

The design of Wells' study

Certainly Wells' own research lends no support to the view that the language of lower class children is functionally inadequate. In setting up his major project into children's language development, he was concerned, in part at least, to explore the possible connections with social class. The study is both more comprehensive and more precisely focussed than the work of the deficit theorists cited above. It is a longitudinal study, following 128 children, some from thirty-nine months and some from fifteen months. There is equal representation of four divisions of family background, as calculated by summing the occupational status and length of education of both parents thus including information about children in social class 3, as well as those nearer to the social extremes. The pre-school information comes from three sources: three monthly radio-microphone

recordings of the child's spontaneous linguistic communication at home, six monthly tests of comprehension and imitation, and information about the child's long-term environment from a structured interview with the mother (Wells 1979b). From the younger children in the original sample of 128, a sub-sample of 32 was selected, again with equal representation of different social groups and this time with a full range of oral language ability as measured at 3½. Further information was obtained for these children from a further recording of spontaneous conversation at home, similar recordings made in the children's classrooms in their first, second and sixth terms, at school, teachers' assessments made at the same times, and interviews carried out with the parents when the children were five and seven years old.

It can be seen that the naturalistic setting of the recordings, their number and their combination with other forms of assessment, permit a fuller picture of language development to emerge than can be obtained from the formal synchronous testing of the deficit studies cited above. Indeed one of the early findings of Wells' study concerns the weakness of the relationship found between measures of children's performance on language tests administered under controlled conditions and developmental measures derived from spontaneous speech (Wells 1978).

3.5.2

Wells' home-based findings

Nevertheless, substantial variation between individual children emerges, both on the single variables measured and also on a general factor. This factor which accounts for 63% of the variation at 3½

years is derived by submitting to a factor analysis nine variables ranging from Mean Length of Utterance (MLU) to pragmatic range. It is taken by Wells to represent

... something that could be described as
'Command of the Language System'.
(Wells 1978 p.457)

On the single measure of MLU at 3½ years the most advanced children had a score of 6 morphemes, (a score not attained by the average child until 5½ years), whereas the least advanced had a score of less than 2.5 morphemes. It would seem from Wells' evidence, that some children certainly do enter school with a far greater productive command of the oral language system than others of the same age.

But these differences do not seem to be class-related in any simple way. On the majority of measures of language development used, these differences in achievement do not show a consistent relationship with Family Background (FB), the variation within groups being greater than that between groups. This is not to say that no class-related differences emerge. Although the majority of children in all the four FB groups tend to score within one standard deviation on either side of the mean, extremely high scorers are found only in the highest FB group and extremely low scorers only in the lowest group (Wells 1981c).

What has been found to be more closely associated than Family Background with the children's rate of progress in oral language development, is the nature of the language addressed by the parent to the child as measured in terms of absolute amount, frequency of extension of the child's meaning, frequency of direct requests in the context of controlling the child's behaviour and frequency of polar interrogatives (Wells 1981b).

3.5.3

Wells' school-based findings

At this point it is necessary to turn to the school-based findings. Strong associations are reported between Family Background and educational attainment measured in terms of success in literacy and numeracy tests at the age of seven, confirming the existence of the problem stated at the beginning of this chapter. Although strong associations are also reported between these measures of educational attainment and measures of oral language at 3½, success in oral language development cannot be seen as the connecting mechanism between social class and school attainment, because, as stated earlier, measures of oral language are not neatly correlated with FB except at the extremes of language proficiency. Furthermore school attainment is more strongly associated with social class itself than with oral language measures (Wells 1981b).

Dialect is one specific language variable examined in connection with school attainment. As might be expected from the findings reported in the earlier part of this chapter, non-standard dialect is found to be significantly associated with FB. But the negative correlation between attainment at seven and teacher-rated non-standard dialect at five, is reported as low. A larger negative correlation is reported between attainment at seven and non-standard dialect at seven, which Wells interprets as indicating that children's dialect drifts away from the standard as a result of low reading attainment. However, uncertainties are presented by the fact that teachers' assessments of dialect at seven could be coloured by their knowledge of the children's school achievements. Certainly the first correlation seems to show that the Bristol dialect neither acts as a

strong barrier to initial reading nor elicits from the teacher strongly counter-productive behaviour (Wells 1981b).

3.5.4

Discussion of Wells' findings on oral language as an explanation for class-related differences in reading attainment

Wells' evidence does not provide any clear support for the hypothesis that it is the oral language of lower class children that inhibits their performance in learning to read at school (Wells 1981e). In the light of Hammill and McNutt's work cited in Chapter 1, this should not be found surprising, particularly since as is understandable in a naturalistic study, Wells is more concerned to mark children's achievement in speaking than in listening. This is not to say that his study shows that oral language, even measured in terms of production rather than reception, to have no bearing at all on progress in learning to read. Indeed Wells finds correlations with tests of literacy and numeracy at 7 years of .49 and .64 respectively for children's language profiles at 3½ years and scoring on school entry on the English Picture Vocabulary Test, both figures significant at the .01 level (Wells 1981c). He concludes that an 'adequate mastery' of spoken language is an important prerequisite of learning to read. However, this 'adequate mastery' does not appear from his study to be easily related to social class and cannot therefore be regarded as the mechanism that bring about class-related differences in success in reading.

Lack of familiarity with written language

4.1

Wells' findings on experience of written language

Wells' study does show one interesting linguistic mechanism. As part of the assessment procedure carried out when they were five years old, the children were rated for their knowledge of literacy on the basis of tests constructed by Clay (Clay 1972). The results from this test yielded the highest correlation of all with attainment at the age of seven, causing Wells to conclude:

although an adequate mastery of spoken language is an important pre-requisite for progress in school, it is knowledge and ability with respect to written language that is of particular importance.

(Wells 1981b p.186)

The results of this test also correlate highly with social class.

Wells sees this knowledge about the mechanics of literacy as

a relatively superficial symptom of the essential characteristics of written language that they have gained from their experience of written language in use in their homes.

(Wells 1982a p. 183)

This finding supported by those reported immediately below, provides an important empirical foundation for the present study.

4.2

Other studies on class-related differences in experience of written language

Earlier studies provide pointers in the same direction. In a study of high and low achievers in 1st grade classes in Chicago, Milner reports that the high achievers had more books available and were read to more often by highly esteemed adults (Milner 1963).

Chazan in his study of the home circumstances of children from 'deprived' and control areas of Swansea reports few differences apart from interest in books (Chazan, Laing and Jackson 1971).

More recently in an exploration of the relationships between literacy and language in the pre-school years, Snow explains social class differences in reading attainment by the distinctive ways in which middle class families prepare pre-schoolers to understand and produce de-contextualised language, principally through reading stories aloud (Snow 1983).

4.3

The work of Reid and Downing

That measures of childrens knowledge of written language on school entry are strong predictors of attainment at seven, is to some extent prefigured in earlier work of other investigators, resulting from the social application of findings referred to briefly in the first chapter. These concern the lack of familiarity exhibited by many children on school entry with such metalinguistic terms as 'word' and 'letter'. But like those of Wells, these earlier findings extend beyond the boundaries of the child's knowledge of language as it has been defined up to this point, since they include findings concerning children's expectations about reading: what it consists in, what use can be made of it, and what the relation is between reading and writing (Reid 1966, Downing 1969). Reid herself concludes her investigation of Edinburgh five year olds with the words:

...reading, prior to the experience, is a mysterious activity to which they come with only the vaguest of expectancies.

(Reid 1966 p.61)

Perhaps concurrence with Reid's conclusions should be qualified since

the children studied were asked to produce explanations both for the technical terms and for the nature of reading. As Downing (op. cit.) notes, this approach confuses a test of linguistic production of a sophisticated sort, with the receptive conception which is what is supposedly being investigated. His own more detailed study in which fuller questions were asked of children and use was made of pictures and concrete objects to determine children's receptive conceptions shows that, not surprisingly, by these means children could reveal a more sophisticated understanding than they could with their own words alone. Nevertheless he states:

... children's thoughts about reading, their notions or conceptions of its purpose and nature, present the most fundamental and significant problem for the teacher of reading.

(Downing 1969 p.217)

4.4

Other studies concerning reading terminology and expectations of reading

Indeed Downing later states that a number of studies in Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Britain all bear out Reid's earlier findings, concluding that it is hazardous to leave the development of these concepts to chance (Downing, Ayers and Schaefer 1978). It should be noted that in general this earlier work neither establishes a clear association between understanding in this area and subsequent development in reading, nor demonstrates clear differentiation between children from different social groups. It does reveal, however, that there is a large possibility of potential misunderstanding on the part of the child in the course of the kind of instructional activities that constitute the teaching of reading in many classrooms.

However cultural differences are not confined to familiarity with instructional terminology. Downing, Ollila and Oliver explore cultural differences by comparing the scores of non-Indian and Indian children in Canadian Kindergartens on measures which include understanding of the communicative purposes of literacy and understanding literacy behaviour as well as understanding the technical language of literacy, letter recognition and letter name knowledge, and recognition of initial phonemes (Downing, Ollila and Oliver 1975). On all five measures the Indian children scored significantly lower than non-Indian children. The authors note that the Indian children came from homes in which there was no tradition of literacy and very little experience of writing, and conclude

These findings seem to indicate more generally that children's cognitive clarity regarding the functions and task activities of the skills of literacy is influenced by socio-cultural factors.

(Downing, Ollila & Oliver 1975 p.316).

5

Ethnographic studies: reading and writing in cultural context

Not all sociolinguistics depends on the survey approach which has furnished the findings mentioned above. The ethnographic approach examines speech in its social and cultural context and has yielded important insights into such matters as the rules in particular cultures regarding when to speak, when to be silent, and how to talk to people in different situations. The ethnography of literacy is not so far advanced, but could be most illuminating as Sherzer notes:

There are many kinds of literacy. We want to know who writes and reads, to whom, in what languages and varieties of language, in what contexts and for what purposes.

(Sherzer 1977 p.148)

In the same volume McDermott notes that students of reading have

virtually ignored the social context of reading activities, but that the ethnographic approach might help to clarify why some learn to read with ease and others do not, remarking that the same cultural context that frames speaking, also frames reading behaviour (McDermott 1977).

5.1

Conklin's work

In support for this thesis McDermott cites Conklin's work with the Hanⁱⁿ who inhabit the rugged, mountainous interior of the island of Mindoro in the Philippines. Without any formal educational institutions, a literacy rate of some 60% (the criterion is not indicated) is achieved at early puberty after a few months of diligent endeavour with the rare Indic script these people use. The relevant cultural information is that among the Hanⁱⁿ, courtship takes place almost exclusively through the medium of written language (Conklin 1949 1960).

5.2

Labov's work

Support for McDermott's argument and a neat negative counterpart to Conklin's finding, is provided by Labov who reports a clear correlation between reading failure and high status in the street culture of a group of young Blacks in Harlem (Labov 1972). The boys of highest status, rather than participating in street gangs as a compensation for failure in school, appear to have chosen freely to opt out of white-dominated culture and to take part instead in a culture that is highly verbal, but has little place for reading. Labov concludes that the major cause of reading failure is cultural

and political conflict in the classroom.

5.3

Ethnographic studies of childrens initiation into literacy in different cultures

Similar ethnographic approaches have been applied to the study of young children's experience of literacy in the home (Heath 1982 a and b, Tannen 1982, Olson Torrance and Hildyard 1985). This work, highly relevant to the present study is explored in detail in Chapter 6. What should be noted at this point is that the kind of literacy experience in the home that is associated with subsequent success in learning to read is seen by Wells and others as an experience of decontextualised language. Spoken and written language are presented as functionally distinct, demanding distinct comprehension strategies (Wells 1982a, Heath 1982a Tannen 1982, Olson, Torrance and Hildyard 1985). These and other differences are explored in Chapters 3 and 4.

6.

Towards a fuller consideration of class-related differences in the uses of written language

6.1

Findings concerning oral language

Most sociolinguistic work in the area of class-related educational retardation has tended to focus exclusively on oral language as the linguistic mechanism connecting social class and school achievement in literacy. As noted above, this has been conceived by some investigators in terms of dialect difference, by others in terms of

deficient control over the formal features of language, and by others in terms of inadequate command of the functional potential of language. But Wells' work, although providing no counter evidence for the view that the child's active use of oral language plays a significant part in initial reading, nonetheless indicates that dialect deviation from the standard (at least in Bristol) does not act as a barrier, and that the vast majority of children have, by the age of five, achieved sufficient mastery of the formal features and functional potential of oral language not to vitiate their early attempts at reading.

6.2

Findings concerning written language

Wells' findings indicate that it is their experience of written language rather than that of oral language which provides the linguistic connection between social class and attainment in literacy.

We are perhaps now moving towards a position where we can develop a clearer notion of what should be the subject matter of the sociolinguistics of literacy. Yet recent surveys of work in this field are devoted in the main to precisely those variables of oral language which Wells has shown to be unimportant in relating social class to school achievement (Cashdan 1975, Horvath 1977, Stubbs 1980).

6.3

The absence of a social dimension in the psycholinguistic conception of the reading process

Earlier in this chapter I stated that the study of language development has been enlarged by Halliday's consideration of language

as meaning, and meaning interpreted in social terms in which the learning of language is conceived as a process of interaction between the child and other human beings, shaped by the individual's needs and the definitions of the culture. But it is the transformational theory of language development that informs the mainstream psycho-linguistic conception of the reading process. It is true that semantic prediction plays a part in this conception, but the assumption is that meaning resides in part in the text and in part in the individual's experience, and is unaffected by socio-cultural differences between groups. Within this framework, investigation of language-related reading problems in connection with class-related reading failure is limited to an investigation of differences at the levels of phonology, lexis and syntax. But a functional view of language development opens up new possibilities.

6.4

Differences between social groups in the uses made of literacy by adults and children in and out of school

I have argued that Bernstein has failed to provide convincing evidence of his main thesis, that is of the existence of educationally significant class-related differences in the uses to which oral language is put. On at least a *prima facie* level, there seems to be a clearer case for such differences existing in the uses made of written language. A sociolinguistic approach to literacy could fruitfully explore not only the uses made of literacy by adults in various cultures and sub-cultures as suggested by Sherzer, (op.cit.) but also the extent to which children experience such uses in school and out of school, both before and during the formalities of learning to read.

Work in this area is now expanding rapidly (Heath 1982, Tannen 1982, Olson, Anderson and Stokes 1984, Torrance and Hildyard 1985).

6.5

Ideas on the functions of literacy informing the Breakthrough to Literacy material

Ironically such a view contributed significantly to the development of the Breakthrough to Literacy material, the product of the Programme in Linguistics and English Teaching directed by Halliday and referred to in the first chapter. In the first edition of the Teacher's Manual it is stated as axiomatic that:

Reading matter for children should, from the beginning be linked to their own spoken language.
(McKay, Thompson and Schaub 1970 p.3)

But the approach, particularly as explicated in the revised edition of the Teacher's Manual, differs from those of Ashton-Warner, Stauffer et al in recognising the significance of the social functions of language and the differences, both formal and functional, between oral and written language (McKay, Thompson & Schaub 1978). In his introduction to the revised edition of the Teacher's Manual Halliday notes

Writing is not just talking with a pencil; it has its own functions and its own special features.
(McKay, Thompson & Schaub 1978 p.3)

Consequently it is argued that

Children should become well acquainted with written language through listening to it and experimenting with it before they are even expected to read it or write it.
(McKay, Thompson and Schaub op.cit. p.9)

It should be noted at this point that this interesting approach rests on theory alone: there is no empirical evidence cited to support the practice of introducing children to the forms and functions of written

language before they are expected to reconstruct and make sense of such language on their own. The programme itself has been evaluated and found to be productive of interesting and successful teaching (Reid 1974). But the precise effect of familiarising children at an early stage with the functions and forms of written language has not been investigated and indeed is not strongly emphasised in the first edition of the Teacher's Manual, the one which guided the teachers participating in Reid's study (McKay Thompson and Schaub 1970). Its use also appears to be on the wane in British Schools, ironically just at the time when sociolinguistic studies of literacy are beginning to provide a rationale for a functional approach.

7

Summary

An examination of the theories and empirical findings of those sociolinguists who have approached the problem of class-related differences in early school achievement in general and initial literacy in particular, has indicated that the taproot of the problem does not seem to lie in dialect difference, language deficit in terms of form, or language deficit in terms of function. While it must be remembered that there are many non-linguistic causes of such class-related differences, it seems that differential awareness and experience of the functions of literacy in different cultures and sub-cultures may act as a powerful influence on reading success in school.

Conclusion

At the end of Chapter 1 I concluded that the valuable insights of the reading theorists of the psycholinguistic school are vitiated by two assumptions. The first, that written language is not fundamentally different from oral language written down, will be questioned in detail in the next chapter. The work explored in this chapter has led to the questioning of the second assumption. This is that any child is essentially predisposed to construct meaning from any written text within his grammatical competence, requiring, in addition to the necessary perceptual and cognitive capacities, only a command of the relevant linguistic forms, the relevant semantic input and appropriate feedback from the teacher. An examination of the sociolinguistic study of literacy from a functional perspective has shown this assumption to be fallacious and leads instead to the suggestion that an awareness of the functional possibilities of the meanings derived from written text, is not evenly distributed among social groups and indeed may be limited for many children starting school.

CHAPTER THREE

The Differences between Spoken and Written Language at Utterance/Sentence Level

1

Introduction

As I stated in the first two chapters, the valuable advances in our understanding of the process of learning to read have been limited by the assumption that oral and written language are fundamentally similar, differing only in their physical realization, and that consequently, provided the child's oral language is sufficiently developed (in formal and/or functional terms) there can be no linguistic barrier to initial reading.

In this chapter I examine the relation between oral and written language at the rank of the individual utterance or sentence and principally in their mature adult forms. In the following chapter I examine differences between oral and written language at the rank of discourse structures. Both these chapters are preliminary to Chapter 5 in which I compare children's experience of oral language on school entry with a sample of the written texts used by many British schools to teach initial reading.

My concern in these three chapters is not simply to document differences, but to do so in a way that provides a basis for viewing the experience of hearing stories read aloud as an initiation into a new variety of language. For this reason, as I have outlined in the introduction to this thesis, I have chosen to work within the framework of systemic grammar, since this gives a dynamic multi-level view of language and its development, relating form to function and

individual performance to social context.

In sections 2, 3, 4 and 5, I organise theoretical and empirical findings on the relations between oral and written language within a framework that owes much to systemic grammar. The two varieties that make optimal use of the signalling systems of oral and written language are characterised initially in terms of situation, semantics and structural configurations, then in terms of the social and cognitive activities to which they orient their users. Finally to the two extreme varieties thus characterised I add intermediate varieties sharing features of both extremes and functioning, at least in part, to mediate between them.

2

Towards a coherent view

2.1

A framework for synthesis

Those who have explored the differences between spoken and written language have looked at language in a confusing multiplicity of ways. What follows is an attempt to synthesise their findings.

To proceed towards an understanding of the dynamics of oral and written language, some kind of framework is necessary which organises the various observations into categories which can be systematically related to each other. The founding father of systemic grammar, Halliday, presents his conception of language as social semiotic in a model which includes the situational elements that act as linguistic determinants, the semantic components that are thus determined and the realization of these components in text, thus permitting features on

one such level to be related to features on another so that they are seen as interdependent components of a system that traces such connections through from the social structure to lexical and syntactic realization.

2.2

Necessary modifications to Halliday's model of language as social semiotic

However two major modifications must be made. Halliday's model represents, as stated, the downward operation of influences originating in the social structure which ultimately determine linguistic realization. It does not provide a means for the representation of influences of the sort argued by Goody, where the social structure and also the nature of mental operations are themselves, in part at least, represented as the result of the form of language used. So some adjustment must be made to allow for this influence operating in the other direction.

The other modification reveals still more clearly the difference between the uses to which I intend to put the model here, and that for which it was designed. I intend here to examine the implications of the choice between oral and written language. For Halliday this choice operates at an intermediate level, that of semantics which lies between what could be called the upper level of situation and the lower level of structural configurations, and is thus dependent on choices made at the higher level and results in other choices at the lower level. But here I present this choice as operating in an apparently independent position. Thus the features taken here as the independent variables are for Halliday embedded in the middle of the

system. So it appears that his model is being turned inside out as well as upside down. However this is not quite so. Although my intention is to relate differences between oral and written language at all levels to differences in the signalling resources of two channels, the implication is not that the choice between the two channels is an independent one, from which the other differences follow as consequences. But in order to determine the features of the two extreme varieties that are furthest removed from each other, to provide the strongest contrast, I use the model to represent the two varieties which most fully exploit the signalling resources of the two channels.

2.3

Differences in the signalling resources of the two channels

I begin with a catalogue of the signalling resources of the two channels. The vocal-auditory nature of the oral signal means that it is speedily and easily produced, requiring no special equipment, and unless magnetic tape is brought into play, leaving no physical trace, no indication of its passage. The speed of reception is tied in lock-step to that of its production making it a two way communication system, as Brazil notes (Brazil 1969). Organised sequentially through time, it conveys information both through the arrangement of phonemes and through the supra-segmental system of intonation. This much is generally agreed, even if the implications of these features have not been fully explored. But there is another feature that must also be included. The production of oral language is normally accompanied by both expressive and indexical gesture which the receiver uses as sources of information which supplement what is obtained through the

phonemic and intonational strands.

At the moment of its reception written language is usually separated by time and/or space from the body of its producer and thus unaccompanied by such gesture. The written channel contrasts with the spoken channel in other respects also. The manual-visual nature of the written signal means that it is produced more slowly, but, where the receiver has developed to a level of proficiency widespread among literate adults, it can be received more quickly than the oral signal. Thus the two processes are not in lock-step and it is a one way, rather than two way communication system. Some equipment is also necessary for the production of the written signal, and what is perhaps most significant is that the signal remains available for scanning or close examination, as a potentially permanent structure. It is organised sequentially through space and conveys information both through the arrangement of phonemes and through the use of punctuation and lay-out.

The differences between the two signalling systems are summarised in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1

Features of the signalling systems of oral and written language

<u>Oral Language</u>	<u>Written Language</u>
-Vocal/auditory;	-Manual/visual;
-speedily produced;	-produced more slowly;
-production needs no equipment;	-production needs some equipment;
-speed of reception tied to that of production;	-speed of reception not tied to that of production;
-no physical trace left;	-physical trace left
-organised sequentially through time;	-organised sequentially through space;
-conveys morphological, lexical and syntactic information through phonemes;	-conveys morphological, lexical and syntactic information through graphemes;
-conveys other information through	-conveys other information through punctuation, typography and layout;
a) supra-segmental system of intonation,	
b) expressive paralinguistics,	
c) indexical paralinguistics	
-two way communication.	-one way communication.

These distinctions between the channels operate to make the language each transmits distinct both in terms of function and of form in ways that are not trivial.

3

Comparison in terms of situation

The fallacy in the assumption that written and oral language are isomorphic is clearly indicated by a consideration of the situations in which the two forms typically occur. The difference between the two situations in which they function most effectively is of a different order from that between the two situations in which spoken language and Ameslan (the American sign language) operate most effectively. Ameslan is a substitute for oral language, used by the deaf in situations where hearing people use oral language and where

the interlocutors are also able to see each other.

The manual-visual channel of Ameslan (which necessitates no special equipment) replaces the vocal-auditory channel of oral language and although the manual-visual channel leads to a loss in intonational information, a reduced lexis and a simplified syntax, yet its speed of production, its impermanence, its temporal organisation and dependence on visual proximity all combine to give Ameslan a situational equivalence to oral language. People with knowledge of both often converse in both simultaneously.

This is not so for the first pair. The differences between oral and written language operate to make the two forms situationally distinct. Those who, suffering from a temporary loss of voice, have ever tried to participate in a conversation by means of written messages, will testify to the ineffectiveness of the procedure.

I now examine each variety in turn in terms of its situational features.

3.1

Situational features of the extreme oral variety

Because of the implications of the physical differences between the production/reception of oral and written language, I add the category 'physical' to the three categories of field, tenor and mode which systemic grammar uses to characterise situation.

3.1.1

Physical

Oral language is used optimally, that is to exploit all the informational components of this complex channel, in situations very

similar to those in which we know it to have developed ontogenetically, and hypothesise it to have developed philogenetically. The participants are able to see as well as to hear each other, and are physically and psychologically close. The vocal-auditory principle on which it operates involves not only the phonological communication of morphological, lexical and syntactic information, but also the intonational communication of thematic and attitudinal information. For the participants to be in a position to hear each other is obviously necessary. But the use of paralinguistics, of facial expression, physical proximity, and expressive and indexical gesture to convey information which supplements the audial, necessitates that, for optimal use of the system the interlocutors should see as well as hear each other, should be physically close enough to allow the signalling of variations in proximity and should share a physical environment to which indexical reference can be made.

The conference between a group of business executives, all of whom are present in the same boardroom, can make fuller use of the oral channel than the conference where one participant takes part by means of a video link. There is no adequate electronic correlate of the eloquent shift in posture that by a subtle combination of non-verbal sound and movement (detectable as shudders of the table as well as visually) indicates a comment on what is being said that can alter the way it is construed. Furthermore, with the video link, gestural reference to objects in a shared environment is absolutely excluded. The telephone, of course, places an even greater restriction on the informational strands that can be brought into service.

3.1.2

Field

These physical aspects of situation underlie the choices with respect to field, which Halliday defines as:

the socially recognised action the participants
are engaged in, in which the exchange of meanings
has a part.

(Halliday 1978 p.143)

The kind of socially recognised action which makes use of all the communicative strands of this channel and also its two-way nature, involves the exploitation of the shared physical context, and therefore close physical proximity, possibly including joint physical action, such as laying a carpet where two way communication is used involving phonemic, intonational, expressive gestural and indicative gestural strands. But the exchange of information concerning matters outside the situation makes slighter use of the indexical paralinguistics, just as mental distance between the participants allows slighter use of expressive paralinguistics.

3.1.3

Tenor

When we turn to tenor, Halliday's second component of situation we see that the features of the signalling resources imply particular choices here too. Tenor denotes the role relationships which are embedded in the situation, that is to say the level of formality, the permanence of the relations between the participants and the degree of emotional charge in that relationship. For optimal use to be made of all the informational strands of the oral signalling system, certain levels of formality, permanence and emotional charge are indicated. The dialogue between business executives across a boardroom table does

not exploit the signalling resources of oral language as fully as does dialogue between people who are closely familiar with one another's use of language and gesture, and with each other's experience and ways of seeing the world.

A high degree of formality does not necessarily outlaw the use of oral language but it restricts the exploitation of some of its informational strands. If the formality of a relationship is taken to mean the extent of its focus on instrumental and informational concerns for which fixed communicative patterns are set to the deliberate exclusion of anything that could involve the creation or maintenance of irrelevant social or emotional bonds between the participants or declarations of individual difference, then in a formal relationship it is clear that more limited use will be made of the strand of expressive gesture, of the attitudinal aspect of the strand of intonation, and of the connotative aspects of lexis that carry similar information. Where the relationship is emotionally charged these strands are brought into play and communicate to the extent that the duration of the relationship permits.

There is also the factor of status. The lock-step relationship between speed of production and speed of reception in oral language means that the relative status of the participants has to be such that the hearer does not consider her time wasted in listening to the speaker. Those in authority who consider that their superior status dictates that they should not devote extensive time to the preoccupations of inferiors, may accept a written communication where a spoken one is denied. Letters of protest are received by the Prime Minister after deputations have been refused an audience. So some status relationships make it impossible for oral language to be used

as a channel of communication.

Thus the optimal use of the information bearing strands of the oral channel can take place only in a situation which gives a particular value, as outlined above, to the three attributes of tenor, to which a fourth has been added, that of status whose value affects not the extent to which the channel is exploited, but whether it can be used at all.

3.1.4

Mode

Mode is the third and final component of situation in Halliday's model. The term denotes the symbolic channel of the communicative situation. Since in the analysis presented here speech and writing are independent variables, the value of mode is narrowed to the choice between dialogue and monologue. These differ sharply with respect to the extent that they permit the potentialities of the oral channel to be exploited. Oral language is a two way system. The feedback this permits to each speaker functions to make the communication more effective. Although a speaker can receive feedback to a monologue (through the paralinguistic response of the hearers), the feedback received through dialogue is more informative. The bridegroom at a wedding reception, addressing fifty friends and relations, as he jokes about the wedding cake in audial, visual and locational proximity to his hearers, although now in a more informal relationship with them than he was during the ceremony, although not debarred the use of the oral channel by status and although sharing bonds of common experience and association with many of his hearers in a situation that is emotionally charged, nevertheless is able to make scantier use of the

oral signalling resources than he is when talking to only one or two of the guests who can respond, correct and question as well as nod, clap and laugh as they did during his speech. The feedback permitted by the lock-step relationship between the speed of production and speed of reception of oral language, prompts the speaker to correct himself, explain himself more fully, using information from the hearers' interjections to repair any communicative breakdown or turn the talk in a direction more to their interest. A skilled public speaker will respond to the non-verbal cues of shuffling feet, shifting of gaze and coughing, and to the verbal cues of the heckler. But it is unlikely that the rest of the audience would tolerate the lecturer giving her full attention to the responses of any one individual, even if that individual were to feel sufficiently unconstrained by social pressures to respond as she would in a relaxed dialogue.

Unless a monologue becomes a dialogue the speaker cannot make full use of the feedback that is part of the informational pattern of oral language, permitted by the nature of the signalling resources. Furthermore, the greater the number of participants, the smaller the chances of fine-tuning the various strands of the channel to achieve maximum communication.

3.1.5

Summary and discussion

I consequently propose that informal dialogue between two people physically, psychologically and experientially close to one another is the situation that permits the maximum use of the signalling resources of the oral channel.

But to say that a particular situation optimises the resources of the channel is not to say that the use of the channel is restricted to that situation. An umbrella may come into its own in a rainstorm, but also function usefully as a walking stick, a toy sword or a prop to keep the back door open. Nor is any value judgement implied concerning the relative significance of the use of oral language in different situations. The elegant mahogany table may make its most significant contribution to the lives of its owners in defending them from a falling bomb, although its features are fully exploited only through its use at an elaborate dinner party. What has been argued is that a particular kind of situation enables most use to be made of the informational resources of the oral language system. And that kind of situation has been characterised as representing clear choices in the three components of the semiotic structure of situation.

This characterisation of the optimal situation for the transmission of oral language possesses features noted by Brazil (1969) and Vachek (1973). Brazil remarks on the non-linguistic environment shared by speaker and hearer, a feature mentioned above in connection with field. Vachek notes the urgency of the stimulus to oral language, the 'here and now' quality, which is partly a feature of field, and partly a feature of mode. It is interesting that other aspects of situation have not received much attention.

3.2

Situational features of the extreme written variety

3.2.1

Physical

The situation that maximises the informational potential of the signalling system of written language, is characterised by a separation of the participants, certainly by time, which permits unrestricted variations in the pacing of production and reception. This temporal separation is precisely what is denied to the temporary mute who attempts to participate in a conversation by means of writing. While separation in time maximises the channel's communicative potential, separation in space certainly does little to reduce it.

3.2.2

Field

Again these physical aspects of situation help to determine the choices made within the situational component of field. The category of socially recognised activity in which this channel maximises its communicative potential, must exclude joint physical action where instant response is needed. The most appropriate activities are more detached, purely linguistic and defined in terms of the language activity itself rather than physical activities to which language contributes. And within this category of detached language, further choices are indicated by the nature of the signalling system.

Since a considered selection of words and their ordering at and above the level of the sentence (in ways that are more fully explored

in Chapter 4) is permitted by the permanence of form of the signal and by the time freedom of this channel, the informational potential which this allows is maximised in philosophical and scientific subject matter (as Olson argues) but also in legal and diplomatic transactions, and works of imaginative literature, all of which can be construed as the higher cultural and civilisational tasks of which Vachek writes, where the precise denotation of each word (and in imaginative literature also the connotation which the writer can convey to the reader or depend on the reader bringing to the text) and the relationships between words established by the syntax and by structuring at the level of discourse, are carefully weighed and considered by both writer and reader (Olson 1977a, Vachek 1973).

3.2.3

Tenor

The situation that makes optimal use of the signalling potential of written language can also be defined in terms of tenor. The greater the degree of formality, the shorter the duration of the relationship between the participants and the smaller the emotional charge, the more pressure will operate on the participants to exploit the features of the signalling system which allow a text to be drafted, reshaped and revised until the meaning becomes explicit.

3.2.4

Mode

In terms of mode, the signalling features of written language are most fully exploited in monologue. The re-writing, re-ordering and revising permitted by the features of permanence and time-freedom, are

at their most effective over extended stretches of discourse. These monologues can themselves be exchanged to form a macro-dialogue, as frequently happens in the correspondence columns of the more 'serious' daily papers and in learned journals. But they remain monologues, self contained and explicit outside their epistolary context.

3.3

Summary of situational differences

Whereas the optimal uses of the resources of oral language occur only in informal dialogues between people physically and psychologically close to one another, the optimal uses of the written channel occur in a situation where the writers and readers are separated.

As stated earlier, the situation in which the signalling resources of oral language can be used most fully, has important similarities with that in which the child first develops language. The participants are close to one another, sharing and making semiotic use of a physical environment, and, to a certain extent, of a mental world. Their mode of discourse is the mutually supportive mode of dialogue. The fact that language is systematically related to such a context of situation is for Halliday:

the guarantee of its significance for the learning
process. It is this that makes language learnable.
(Halliday 1975 p.143)

But the situation in which the signalling resources of written language can be most fully exploited, takes the form not of a supportive starting point, but a highly sophisticated culmination of social and intellectual development. The separation of the participants, the unemotional formality of their relationship, the

psychological isolation of the activity and the onus placed on both the writer and the reader by the form of monologue, constitute a difference which gives the term 'situation', cognitive as well as social and physical attributes, as is fully explored by Goody (Goody 1977).

The features of the situations which maximise the two sets of signalling resources are summarised in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Features of the situations making maximal use of the signalling resources of oral and written language

<u>Oral Language</u>	<u>Written Language</u>
<u>Physical</u> -Physical proximity of participants without barrier to sound or vision.	-physical separation of participants in terms of time (and space).
<u>Field</u> -Social activities involving joint physical action or other use of shared physical context.	-Social activities concerned exclusively with language consisting of higher cultural and civilisational tasks, also social acts forming content of text.
<u>Tenor</u> -Informal, established and emotionally charged relationship between participants.	-Formal and unemotional relationship between participants.
<u>Mode</u> -Dialogue.	-Monologue.

Comparison in terms of semantics

Now we turn to the level of semantic features, which, following Halliday, I will present under the headings of the three meta-functions: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual. In Halliday's model the choices made within these three metafunctions, are largely determined by the values of the three components of situation: field determines the ideational, tenor the interpersonal and mode the textual. I should at this point emphasise that I am concerned in this chapter with the semantics of individual utterances, or sentences in the case of the extreme written variety, not with the semantics of conversation or complete text. This is the concern of Chapter 4.

4.1

Semantic features of the extreme oral variety

4.1.1

Ideational

Language maximising the oral signalling resources is characterised in terms of its experiential content firstly by the apparent randomness of its subject matter as Crystal and Davy note, secondly by extreme reliance on the extra linguistic context, or rather on socially agreed or negotiated interpretations of that context (Crystal and Davy 1969). Again this is typical of much of the language of young children. Luria terms such language 'synpraxic' and observes that all context-independent uses of language develop from a synpraxic matrix (Luria 1969). However the semantics of synpraxis do not become

redundant: they are brought into play every time we ask "What are oranges?" at the greengrocer, interject "Not the blue one" as we sort the washing, or exclaim "A bit odd, that" at an exhibition of paintings. We continue to make use of an extralinguistic semantic to the extent that we participate in activities concerning objects and events in the immediate physical environment, carrying out work co-operatively or commenting on events as they are being jointly experienced. Consequently meaning in this variety exists not through the verbal formulation alone, but also in the socially agreed or negotiated interpretation of the situation which involves both the physical environment and the field, the transaction in which the participants are engaged.

In terms of its logical content, language maximising the oral signalling resources as its randomness of subject matter suggests, tends not to be markedly concerned with logical consistency. As Chafe puts it, all speakers in spontaneous conversation tend

to have less concern for consistency than for
experiential involvement,
(Chafe 1982 p. 45)

4.1.2

Inter-personal

The informality, degree of permanence and of emotional charge in the relationship between participants that characterise the tenor of the situation in which this variety occurs, have two effects on the interpersonal component. Since the participants are well known to one another, communicative exchanges can be informed by the hearer's knowledge of the speaker, her experience and her attitudes, leading to the divination of her intentions, so that the hearer seeks meaning not

only in the words, not only in the socially agreed interpretation of the situation, but also in the inferred intentions of the speaker of which the words themselves may give an inadequate account. The informality and emotional charge mean that the nature of the relationship itself becomes a significant part of what is communicated, being continually defined, refined, reinforced or modified in ways that bring the participants' mental worlds into alignment, leading to the shared focus which Brazil and Tannen see to be a notable feature of informal oral language (Brazil 1969, Tannen 1985).

But as well as through this indirect connection, choices within the interpersonal component of the semantic level are also directly influenced by the signalling resources of the oral channel, for the strands of intonation and of expressive gesture can communicate a subtle variety of inter-personal meanings and cannot be faithfully translated into written words.

4.1.3

Textual

It is the mode of dialogue that determines the textual, the third semantic component. The textual meta-function, which binds semantic elements into a cohesive and structured whole, operates in this variety partly to tie the verbal elements to relevant elements of the extra-lingual context, partly to tie different parts of the speaker's utterance to each other, and partly to tie the utterances of the various participant speakers together into one discourse, so that meaning is a joint construction, given texture through this component and realized through cohesive devices and patterns of intonation,

explored more fully in Chapter 4.

4.1.4

Summary

The semantic properties of this variety can be summarised as apparent randomness (or idiosyncratic order) of subject matter, heavy reliance on the extralinguistic context and on the participants' divinations of each others' intentions achieved through shared experience and ideas, heavy emphasis on the definition of interpersonal relationships and a weaving of these elements together to form a seamless but not unstructured text whose shape and orientation changes but which lacks clear beginnings and endings as the exchange of meanings is a continuously developing process. The focus is on inter-personal involvement rather than propositional information.

4.2

Semantic features of the extreme written variety

4.2.1

Ideational

A very different set of semantic features characterises the variety that makes most use of the signalling resources of the written channel. Separation of writer from reader means that the words themselves must convey the meaning that could in oral discourse, come partly from a shared extra-linguistic context. Olson asserts that such text is verbally explicit and thus autonomous (Olson 1977a). Certainly to maximise the benefits of the deliberation, rewriting and

re-reading that this channel permits, the text has a semantic density far greater than the density that is desirable in oral language, and thus carries, as Brazil and Chafe observe, the maximum of information that is new to the hearer (Brazil 1969 Chafe 1982). As Goody states, it is also logically consistent, since consistency also puts a premium on the deliberative aspect of the procedure (Goody 1977). Furthermore the major emphasis is given to precisely these qualities, which can be seen as high loadings in the experiential and logical sub-divisions of the ideational component. As Chafe states of academic prose

The writer is ... concerned with producing something that will be consistent and defensible when read by different people at different times in different places, something that will stand the test of time.
(Chafe 1982 p.45)

4.2.2

Interpersonal

However, in the absence of the elequence of intonation, and facial and bodily gesture, the potentials for creating inter-personal meanings are more limited in all written language than they are in oral language. In this particular variety the psychological separation of the participants limits these possibilities still further.

4.2.3

Textual

The function of the textual component within this variety is determined by the choice of monologue and therefore consists in making a cohesive and structured whole of each text, a whole that is clearly demarcated with a perceptible beginning and end, and where elements are clearly related to one another by means of cohesive devices. Such

features are more fully explored in Chapter 4.

4.2.4

Summary

In summary, the semantic features of the variety which makes maximal use of the written channel are firstly an independence from the extralingual context and from the reader's divinations of the author's intentions by appeal to sources of information outside the text, secondly an emphasis on logical consistency and thirdly a shaped and cohesive texture. These features combine to give this variety the characteristic autonomy, self-sufficiency and explicitness which Olson has stressed are the characteristics of 'text' as he construes the term (Olson 1977a and b).

The semantic features of the two contrasting varieties are summarised in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3

Semantic features of the two varieties making maximal use of the signalling resources of oral and written language.

<u>Oral Language</u>	<u>Written Language</u>
<u>Ideational</u>	
-Apparent randomness of subject matter.	-Orderliness of subject matter.
a)Experiential	
-Extreme reliance on agreed interpretation of extra-linguistic context.	-Independence from extra-linguistic context; -emphasis on high information density.
b)Logical	
-Less emphasis on logical consistency.	-Emphasis on logical consistency.
<u>Inter-personal</u>	
-Emphasis on subtle variety of inter-personal meanings by appeal to	-Low emphasis on inter-personal meanings, which are restricted in range.
a) hearer's knowledge of speakers' attitudes and experience, and	
b) hearer's inference of speaker's intentions.	
<u>Textual</u>	
-Cohesive devices function	-Cohesive devices function within
a) within utterance to tie elements together,	text to tie elements together
b) between successive utterances of different speakers to tie these together,	giving it precise beginning and end.
c) between utterance and elements of non-verbal context seamless but structured quality without clear beginnings or endings.	

Comparison in terms of structural configurations

We turn now to the level of formal description, that is to description in terms of aspects of the lexico-grammatical systems and the systems of cohesion and intonation.

Halliday postulates that choices within the three formal dimensions of transitivity, mood and theme are determined by choices within the three dimensions at the semantic level, the ideational activating transitivity, the inter-personal activating mood and the textual activating theme.

To follow this categorisation makes it possible to establish systematic connections between the formal level and the levels already discussed, but unfortunately those who have done most to identify the formal properties of the two varieties have not used Halliday's terminology, nor his way of conceptualising the formal realization of language. Nevertheless I will attempt to present such observed differences in terms of this framework so that the contrastive descriptions of the extremes of oral and written language may be as consistent as possible.

The most thorough catalogue of the distinguishing features of informal conversation (a term which can be construed as referring to something very close to the extreme oral variety under discussion), is that produced by Crystal and Davy (Crystal and Davy 1969).

5.1

Structural configurations of the extreme oral variety

5.1.1

Transitivity

The term transitivity refers to the realization of all that is in the ideational component, that is the representation of processes, their participants (both animate and inanimate), and the circumstantial features associated with them. It is under this broad heading that most of the observed formal features fall. The extreme oral variety has features at this level which are activated by those of the higher levels and also by features of the channel itself. The frequent use of minor sentences and of incomplete sentences and clauses as noted by Crystal and Davy (op.cit.) and the frequent changes of structure in mid-sentence noted by Brazil (1969), can be seen as a product of the experiential element at the semantic level, for the semantic feature of extreme reliance on agreed interpretation of the extra-linguistic context, often makes the use of formally complete sentences redundant. In a situation where the participants are engaged in putting up a shelf, the words "A bit up your end" are enough to convey the meaning "Raise the shelf up a bit your end". And the instant feedback that this channel allows provides sufficient insurance should the initial attempt at communication fail. Thus features of the type noted by Brazil and Crystal are clearly explained in the model developed in this chapter.

They are also supported by the findings of other linguists. Looking at the structure of independent clauses in both speech and writing, O'Donnell finds in speech a lower incidence of all types of

dependent clause apart from those in the nominal position (O'Donnell 1974). In a more detailed itemisation of the key linguistic markers of unplanned speech, Ochs notes a tendency to string together co-ordinate clauses often linked by 'and' rather than to use subordinate clauses, and a tendency also to juxtapose clauses with no explicit syntactic link (Ochs 1979). She also stresses the typicality of simple active sentences.

The same is also true of features within the clause. Crystal and Davy note a number of these, observing firstly that subjects tend to be more often composed of pronouns than of nominal groups, a feature which can be seen as another product of dependence on the extralinguistic context. This observation is supported by the finding of Quirk et al. that in informal conversation some 87% of noun phrases in the subject position are composed of names or pronouns, a much higher proportion than that found in scientific writing (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartik 1985). Ochs sees the deletion of subjects of clauses as one of the markers of unplanned speech. Secondly Crystal and Davy observe that both the nominal and the verbal group tend to be simply structured with little post-modification, a feature which can be seen as another result of the lack of pressure in the situation towards explicitness in the words themselves and is also borne out by the findings of Quirk et al, by O'Donnell's findings on simplicity of structure of noun phrases and verb phrases in speech and by Chafe's finding of the relative absence of attributive adjectives in spontaneous conversational language. Their third set of observations concerns the tendency for lexical items to be very simple and the frequent use of a limited range of intensifiers such as 'a bit', and of 'weak' words such as 'got' and 'nice'. This group of

features can be seen as resulting in part from the operation of the same forces referred to above, and in part from the presence in the oral channel of the additional strands of gesture and intonation which can be operated to make such apparently vague words more precisely informative.

5.1.2

Mood

Mood denotes not simply a property of the verb itself, but all forms of linguistic realization of the roles adopted by the speaker or imposed on the hearer. Consequently the term includes the connotative aspect of lexical items, and patterns of intonation to convey attitude, as well as patterns of mood and person in the verb. In the extreme oral variety, Crystal and Davy note much use of phatic vocabulary, in-group slang, abbreviations and contracted forms of verbal groups. Chafe remarks on the very high incidence of the intensifiers 'just' and 'really' in spontaneous conversation, noting that their function is to express enthusiastic involvement (Chafe op. cit.).

All of these features can be seen as the product of the informal, established and emotionally charged relationship between participants that has been noted as marking the tenor of this variety described at the level of situation. Crystal and Davy also remark on characteristic patterns of intonation heavily used to build and maintain such a relationship. As to the mood of the verb itself, Crystal and Davy note that interrogative types are frequent, clearly a product of the emphasis on interpersonal meanings at the semantic level, and the situational feature of dialogue. They also note that

imperatives are usually softened, a feature which can be clearly related to the already mentioned characteristics of tenor in this variety. They do not make explicit reference to the variety's use of person, but the considerable use of the first is noted by Chafe, and here again the situational features of tenor and mode provide sufficient explanation.

5.1.3

Theme

Theme structure concerns the status of the clause and its parts as units of communication, and thus, in addition to cohesion, involves intonational patterning and other means of setting off rheme from theme. The extreme oral variety is marked by the use of much inter-clausal linkage of a particular kind. Crystal notes that little use is made of subordination (Crystal 1975). Instead he notes linkage is often established through comment clauses and tag statements. Crystal and Davy note the frequent use of such cohesive features as determining ellipsis, substitution and reference through personal pronouns.

All these features serve not only to create continuity, but more significantly to indicate the particular relevance of what is being said now to what has gone before, in ways that will be examined under the heading of discourse structure in the next chapter. As to theme structure within the clause, as Firbas notes, the differentiation of rheme from theme, or the establishment of what the Prague School term Functional Sentence Perspective (FSP) is achieved in oral language partly through the linear arrangement of sentence elements, partly through subordination and partly through prosodic weighting (Firbas

1972). These combine to indicate the degree of communicative dynamics carried by the various elements. Because of the presence of the intonational strand, the need to convey such information through word order is reduced. Ochs includes unmarked SPCA order as a characteristic feature of unplanned speech.

5.1.4

Physical realization

At the level of acoustic realisation, Crystal and Davy note the frequent use of clicks and other non-phonemic sounds. They also remark on indistinctness in the phonology, a feature which can be accounted for partly by the hearer's recourse to non-linguistic sources of information and partly by the situation which provides the ever-present possibility of repair of imperfect communication.

5.1.5

Summary of structural configurations of the extreme oral variety

In summary, the features of this variety at the levels of situation and semantics, have a very noticeable effect on its formal realization, resulting in a form of language that is marked, in terms of its transitivity, by looseness of structure at the sentence level, simplicity of structure in the nominal and verbal groups, and the use of simple lexical items. In terms of its mood it is marked by the use of phatic vocabulary, in-group slang and contracted forms, the use of intonation to convey role relationships, and the use of interrogative and softened imperatives. In terms of theme it is marked by linkages provided by the use of cohesive devices operating between as well as within utterances, the use of comment clauses and tag statements, and

also by the use of intonation in addition to word order, to create the functional sentence perspective. Acoustically it is marked by the presence of non-phonemic vocalisation and the indistinctness of much phonology.

5.2

Structural configurations of the extreme written variety

5.2.1

Transitivity

Of course the extreme written variety presents a rather different picture. In terms of transitivity the most significant feature is the completeness of sentences and clauses and the absence of minor sentences, as Crystal notes (Crystal 1975). This is clearly the formal correlate of experiential features at the semantic level: linguistic explicitness means that sentences are completed and is necessitated by the absence of any readily available mechanism to effect repair where communication breaks down.

The use of complex nominal and verbal groups in this variety, noted by O'Donnell and Chafe, is explained in the same way (O'Donnell op. cit., Chafe op. cit.). The further propositional content departs from an agreed interpretation of the extra-linguistic context, the more necessary it becomes to specify that content, by means of carefully chosen complication of the noun and verb phrases. Pronouns must be tied to their referents by clear linguistic means, as otherwise confusions occur for which the situation provides no easy remedy. The absence of intonation intensifies this pressure for precision in lexis, which is further reinforced by the pressure

towards high lexical density. All this results in the use of a wide lexical range. For the same reasons post-modification of the verbal and nominal groups often taking the form of a sequence of prepositional phrases is another notable feature (Chafe op. cit.). The emphasis on logical consistency leads to a high frequency of explicit connectives which mark the logical status of each section of the text.

5.2.2

Mood

The mood of this variety is marked by its emphasis on the denotative aspect of lexis, and its exploitation of the connotative only when the connotations are generally available to all potential readers of the text in question and when such connotations are consonant with the formality of the relationship between writer and readers. This formality and lack of emotionality between writer and readers virtually outlaws the use of contracted forms. Interrogatives, where used, tend to exist as a device to focus the reader's attention on subsequent themes, and so, perhaps, ought more properly to be considered under the heading of theme. Imperatives seldom appear, a feature which can be explained by the exclusively linguistic nature of field in this variety. The tentativeness that is often the product of the long reflection preceding and accompanying linguistic production in this variety, is expressed through modality as noted by O'Donnell, partly through the use of modal auxiliaries and partly through adverbial means.

Chafe finds passive forms to be present 5 times more often in academic prose than in spontaneous conversation, a fact which he

attributes to the writer's detachment (Chafe op. cit.).

There is a further layer of complication in the case of narrative fiction. Although those features itemised above characterise all those parts of narrative fiction in which the narrator speaks to the reader, namely the narration itself, they do not characterise the dialogue which tends to be closer to the extreme oral variety. This is explained when one considers as was mentioned earlier, that the tenor of narrative fiction exists in two senses: there is the relationship between the writer and the reader that is realized through the narrative, and that between the narrated participants that is realized through the dialogue. The presence of dialogue, with all its indicators of mood, does not prevent narrative fiction from being considered an exemplar of this variety.

5.2.3

Theme

In terms of theme this variety is marked by a number of devices which combine to create a precise functional sentence perspective despite the absence of intonation. As Firbas notes, word order is the prime means by which this is achieved in all writing, reminding us of Coleridge's characterisation of poetic writing as "words in their best order" (Coleridge, Letters 12.1.1827). But co-ordination and subordination also contribute, as does punctuation, by indicating informational groupings rather than reflecting the pattern of pauses in conversation. Cohesive devices, used extensively, operate endophorically to bind the elements of the text together and to signal the boundaries of the text, giving it a clear beginning and end.

5.2.4

Physical realization

Texts in this variety tend to be graphemically distinct since the high informational density and the lack of feedback make the precise resolution of indistinct text problematical.

5.3

Summary of structural configurations of the extreme written variety

In summary, the extreme written variety is marked in terms of transitivity by the use of complete major sentences, complex nominal and verbal groups frequently post-modified, and a wide range of lexis. In terms of mood it is marked by emphasis on denotative aspects of lexis, absence of contracted forms, absence of interrogatives and imperatives, and the use of modal auxiliaries and modal adverbial phrases. Where narrative fiction is concerned these descriptions apply only to the narrative itself, not to the directly presented dialogue. In terms of theme this variety is marked by the extensive use of cohesive features to bind the elements into a continuous and structured whole (in ways that are examined in the next chapter), and also by the use of word order, punctuation, co-ordination and subordination to create the functional sentence perspective that is achieved in oral language largely through intonation. All of these features are in turn realized in an unambiguous graphology.

The features of structural configuration of the two varieties which make maximal use of the signalling resources of oral and written language are summarised below in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Structural configurations of the two varieties making maximal use of the signalling resources of oral and written language

<u>Oral Language</u>	<u>Written Language</u>
<u>Transitivity</u> -Use of minor sentences, incomplete sentences and clauses, simple nominal and verbal groups; -absence of post-modification; -narrow range of lexis.	-Less complexity and more parallelism; -restriction to complete major sentences; -use of complex nominal and verbal groups; -wide range of lexis.
<u>Mood</u> -Use of phatic vocabulary, in-group slang, contracted forms, interrogatives and softened imperatives as well as declarative; -use of intonation to convey role relationships	-Emphasis on denotative aspect of lexis; -absence of contracted forms, interrogatives and imperatives; -use of modal auxiliaries and modal adverbial phrases (plus other features of mood in dialogue of narrative fiction).
<u>Theme</u> -Use of cohesive features to create ties within and between utterances; -use of intonation as well as word order to create functional sentence perspective.	-Use of cohesive features to create ties within text and clear beginning and end; -use of word order, punctuation, co-ordination and subordination to create functional sentence perspective.
<u>Physical Realization</u> -Presence of non-phonemic vocalisation; -indistinct phonology.	-Unambiguous graphology.

6

Other differences

The two varieties have been described in terms of their

contrasting situations, semantics and structural configurations. It now remains to explore whether these polar opposites also differ in their effects on the mental operations of their users and in their relationship to the social structure.

The extreme oral variety, as I have defined it, is not a language of mental extension, since it confines semantics to the here and now, and to those socially agreed conceptions of the here and now that are shared between its participants. Whenever the semantics of a conversation moves beyond these boundaries, it moves out of the extreme oral variety as defined here. By contrast, the extreme written variety, in its explicitness, its high degree of informational and logical content and its facilitation of retrospection and revision, lends itself to advanced mental operations, serving not only to communicate established ideas but also to allow the writer and reader to explore new ideas, test their implications and revise ideas in the light of inconsistencies revealed on the page. Thus it encourages the thinking of both writer and reader to move towards greater consistency and complexity.

The two varieties above differ in their relationship to the social structure. The extreme oral variety provides no powerful instrument of change because of its inexplicitness, its restriction to socially agreed conceptions and its lack of permanence. But the extreme written variety permits new interpretations of the social structure to be constructed, their validity to be tested and their implications to be thoroughly explored. Marx's Das Kapital (1867) is a paradigmatic exemplar of this variety, and although the transformation of the social order which followed its publication owes much to the peculiar social, political and economic circumstances of Russia in the early

years of this century, yet much is also owed to the document itself, which is characterised by precisely those features itemised in this chapter.

7

Complications to the model

In the interests of economy and clarity, only the two extreme varieties have been described in this chapter. Goody's concern is, of course, wider than this: he argues that all forms of written language have a functional relation to the mental operations and social structures which compose their user's worlds (Goody 1977). Olson sets up an opposition between what is here termed the extreme oral variety, and a sub-category of the extreme written variety (excluding narrative fiction and other poetic forms).

This language of essayist literacy or, to use Chafe's phrase, formal academic prose, does differ in ways that are not yet fully explored, from the language of written literature in general and prose fiction in particular. Yet both can be regarded as variants of the extreme written variety since both make maximal use of the signalling resources of writing. Some observations have been made at the level of structural configurations, for example Quirk et al. report an incidence, in prose fiction, of pronominals and other simple noun phrases in the subject position, much closer to conversation than to scientific writing (Quirk et al. 1985). The nominalization which Chafe notes in academic prose is unlikely to occur with such frequency in prose fiction.

These differences are, of course, realizations of differences at the semantic level. Although the emphasis in both varieties is on the

ideational rather than the inter-personal, the content of the ideational differs. In prose fiction, particularly contemporary Western prose fiction, it tends to consist of the high particularity and subjective experience of living, with a consequent emphasis on inter-personal relationships between the narrated characters into which the reader is invited to enter. The ideational content of academic writing, however is more concerned with a detached view of the generalised outer world.

Prose fiction seems, therefore, to have significant links with the extreme oral variety. Such connections operate also through discourse structure as is more fully explored in Chapter 4. Nevertheless the differences outlined at the levels of situation, semantics and structural configurations still stand: there is a vast difference between the language of intimate chat and the language of A Maggot (Fowles 1985).

Olson presents his two chosen varieties as if no others existed between them. But not all conversation is as informal and context-dependent as the extreme oral variety, nor does all written language exploit the features of the channel sufficiently thoroughly to produce the patterned, organised, logically consistent density of information that characterises the extreme written variety whether academic prose or fictional narrative. A two year old's conversation about the ducks seen on the pond that afternoon has edged out of the former category and a story in a woman's magazine that reinforces rather than challenges its readers' assumptions and is ~~more~~ more concerned more with the sublimation of fantasies than the exploration of possibilities, has not attained membership of the latter category. And yet the first is clearly spontaneous, informal conversation and

the second is a written text meant to be read silently.

Between spontaneous conversation and written texts intended to be read silently, lie many other varieties. Gregory itemises such intermediate varieties as spontaneous monologue, reading aloud a written text intended to give the impression of spontaneous monologue, and reading aloud a text intended openly for that purpose (Gregory 1967). The two varieties with which this chapter has been principally concerned, represent only sub-categories of those at either end of his spectrum. Goody suggests that the picture is further complicated by the dialectical^t relationship between written and spoken language maintaining that with educated speakers, even their informal conversation is influenced by their complex and context-free use of language in reading and writing (Goody 1977). Moffett maintains that in written language we incorporate and integrate ideas and elements of information which make their first appearance in dialogue (Moffett 1968). So to write of two distinct varieties is by no means to capture the complexity of the relationship between spoken and written language.

I have presented the two varieties that make most use of the contrastive features of the two signalling systems, in terms of Halliday's model of functional linguistic description and have shown that they differ on all levels, in terms of situation, semantics and structural configuration. What remains to be examined is whether these varieties differ also at the rank of discourse structure. This is the concern of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Structure of Oral and Written Discourse

1

Introduction: the case for discourse analysis

In the preceding chapter of this thesis I have described two varieties of English in terms of the properties of individual utterances. This should not be taken to imply that I hold the view that language is composed of unstructured agglomerations of individual utterances, each one connected to those that precede and follow only through the superficial ties of cohesion. Structures larger than the utterance exist, although our understanding of their form and function (certainly where oral language is concerned) is as yet limited.

All speakers of language know intuitively that there are such structures above the rank of utterance or sentence. We all recognise that longer texts have coherence and that to ignore the relation of the individual utterance to this larger whole can be to limit or distort one's understanding of even the individual utterance.

Such intuitions are evident in the way in which we talk about language informally. Terms such as 'conversation', 'discussion' or 'article' are embodiments of our belief in the coherence of texts. Other terms such as 'interruption', 'aside' and 'irrelevance' imply recognition that violation of such coherence is an aberration to be noted. When we complain that a remark has been taken out of context we reveal our recognition of the significance of the contribution that linguistic context makes to the meaning of individual utterances.

Discourse analysis is concerned with the principles that underlie

such intuitive recognition of the coherence of text. Its major claim to significance is that communication, understanding and interaction are established and maintained principally through structures above the rank of individual utterances. Stubbs writes

It is clear that whereas linguistics studies language, discourse analysis can study the actual mechanisms by which communication, understanding and interaction are maintained.
(Stubbs 1983, p.30)

There is as yet no theory or model of discourse that can give a reliable, precise and comprehensive framework for the useful description of a wide range of varieties, of the sort that systemic linguistics provides for individual utterances. But in the last fourteen years or so there has been an impressive (if unevenly distributed) accumulation of evidence to support the basic propositions that systematic linguistic patterning operates over stretches of language larger than the individual utterance, and that such patterning is distinctive for particular types of discourse. In Section 2 I attempt to structure relevant findings into a framework consistent with that set up in Chapter 3. Section 3 is concerned with the discourse structure of a variety of written language which has a rather different history. The written variety I examine is that of contemporary prose fiction and thus only a small subset of the extreme written variety. My reasons for narrowing the category in this way are explained at the beginning of Section 3. As in Chapter 3, the overall aim of this chapter is to move towards a coherent account of the differences between oral and written language, an account which might illuminate what children are undertaking when they embark on learning to read. My conclusions are presented in Section 4.

Towards a systemic view of the discourse structure of informal conversation

2.1

Methods of approach

Much of our understanding of the structure of conversation has come about indirectly. To achieve their findings, discourse analysts have proceeded in a patchy fashion with investigators concentrating their attention on a few rather formalised varieties such as the interchange of ritual insults, talk in certain kinds of classroom, or therapeutic interviews (Labov 1972, Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, Labov & Fanshel 1977). Beginnings must be made somewhere and it seems sensible to start with types of discourse that appear on prima facie evidence to be relatively predictable and clearly structured. But such analyses may have limited validity for those concerned to characterise the structure of conversation. At such an early stage in the investigation of a new field such as discourse analysis, it is inevitable that the researcher should focus on particular sub-categories of the phenomena and seek rules for the particular before attempting to construct rules of more general applicability. In the absence of any body of general theory to draw on, the models that are constructed by discourse analysts are very closely tied to the particular material under study and thus lack wider explanatory power. Burton writes of the danger of trying to fit the peculiar patterns of such peculiar types of discourse onto conversational material (Burton 1981). Not only do the patterns fail to fit, even the terms are not easily transferable from one field of discourse to

another. Burton makes a plea for a model "sufficiently general and powerful to handle all types of talk" (Burton op. cit. 62-3). As yet no such model is available, although attempts are being made to move in that direction (Berry 1981, Wells and Montgomery 1981). Even a model of this sort would be inadequate for my purposes here since it would not permit the comparison of conversation with written language.

Stubbs recognises the need for a universally applicable model, asserting that

... it is not adequate to separate analyses of spoken,
written and literary discourse.
(Stubbs 1983, p.194).

But it is easier to recognise a need than to fill it and it is likely to take many years of work by discourse analysts examining many types of material before a model as powerful as that of systemic grammar is constructed.

Meanwhile the investigator trying to produce a richer description of particular varieties of language must take what is offered: maps of small pieces of territory, each selecting different kinds of feature as worthy of note and each with its own conceptual frameworks and conventions of representation. There is as yet little opportunity for the principled description of varieties shown to be widely different by other ranks of linguistic description.

The oral variety I am concerned to investigate is one such variety. Ochs defines 'unplanned discourse' as talk which is not thought out prior to its expression (Ochs 1979). My term 'informal conversation' is a refinement of this and includes only such talk produced in informal situations between speakers who know each other well and thus is very close to the extreme oral variety postulated in Chapter 3.

I have ordered the relevant evidence into a multi-level model of the discourse structure of informal conversation. The model is an attempt to characterise both the exchange and larger conversational units. As the model is explicated, points are revealed where relevant published evidence is lacking. At such points I have drawn on informal first hand experience to complement the published evidence referred to.

As do many of the researchers cited, I use the term 'exchange' to denote the minimal unit of conversational interaction and define this as consisting, in its complete form, of the obligatory elements of an initiating move by one speaker and a responding move by another, with further optional moves operating as continuation or feedback. Moves themselves are composed of one utterance or more, produced by one speaker. I use the term conversation to denote the maximal unit: all that happens between the points where participants begin to talk to each other in an unplanned way, and the point where they stop doing so. The units intermediate between these two. I define no more precisely than to say that they consist of one exchange or more, that their structure and inter-relationship varies between participants and contexts, and that they exist at a number of different ranks, the higher, of course, subsuming the lower, and being in their own turn subsumed by the conversation itself.

While the model itself clearly has four levels, I present a detailed account of only two of these, under the headings of semantics and structural configurations. I omit the situation and signalling systems, since these clearly tend to remain constant over whole conversations. For this reason what I specified under those headings

in Chapter 3 holds true here also. However I should emphasise at this point that the relationship between participants, and their perceptions of the situation in which they are conversing have important effects on the semantics of whole conversations. The speakers' choice of topic and the roles they adopt vis a vis one another are not the same at a family wedding as they are in a cinema queue. But in both cases the conversations are limited and shaped by an awareness of such social constraints.

Before passing on to a consideration of semantics and structural configurations, I would point out that the constancy of situation and signalling system over a large number of utterances is in itself an indicator of consistency and coherence above the rank of the individual utterance.

2.2

The semantic structure of the exchange and of larger discourse units

Halliday sees the ideational content of the discourse of dialogue as commodity exchanged by the participants which, since dialogue is often embedded in physical transactions, may consist of linguistically coded information, and/or of goods and services (Halliday 1977). The inter-personal content he sees as reciprocal roles which the speakers take vis a vis one another and the commodity being exchanged. Thus giving is matched by receiving, and demanding by giving on demand. It is this two dimensional view of discourse structure that has framed the work of Wells and Montgomery on the oral language experience of young children (Wells and Montgomery 1981).

While not necessarily framed by such a two dimensional approach, discourse analysis has included examination of both the ideational and

the interpersonal content of exchanges and larger units. One of the central features of all continuous text appears to be a semantic inter-dependence between the constituent utterances. This operates in both the ideational and the interpersonal dimensions.

2.2.1

Ideational Patterns

A peculiarity of conversation that Berry has shown and one that concerns constatives only, is that even single propositions may not be confined to particular utterances, but may instead be spread over exchanges in a variety of ways (Berry 1981). Ochs observes that in unplanned conversation, propositions are often jointly constructed over two speakers' utterances (Ochs 1979).

A more widely noted feature of conversations is that the ideational content of many utterances cannot be identified through an examination of that utterance alone, nor is appeal to an agreed interpretation of the extralinguistic context always a sufficient gloss (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974, Labov and Fanshel 1977). In any extended text, whether conversation or written monologue, some parts serve to gloss other parts. In conversation such interdependence operates between utterances by different speakers. Wells and his co-workers have shown us that this is very much the case for parents and young children (Wells and Montgomery 1981). This ideational interdependence can operate at a number of different levels of abstraction which, however, Wells and Montgomery do not define in any easily verifiable manner. It certainly operates over the exchange.

Thus ideational meanings in conversation do not inhere

definitively in individual utterances, but are extended, completed or modified across exchanges or larger stretches of text: the emergent meaning operates as a binding force which ties conversational utterances into conversational discourse.

2.2.2

Interpersonal patterns

In the interpersonal content, semantic interdependence of utterances over the exchange is also marked. Wells and Montgomery have shown us something of the range of discourse roles that can be adopted in the conversation between parents and young children. They see that, within the exchange, the adoption of these roles is patterned into reciprocal groupings: giving tends to be followed by acknowledging, and initiating by responding, for example. In many cases the status of an utterance may be unclear without an examination of what has gone before and what comes after. In order for the outside observer to decide on the discourse role assumed by the speaker of a particular utterance, one may have to set that utterance against other utterances (Wells and Montgomery 1981). Labov and Fanshel have shown that such reciprocal groupings operate in talk not simply over the exchange, but also at higher ranks, at higher degrees of abstraction. This means that the assignation of interpersonal status to a given utterance may be dependent on the categorisation of the interpersonal content of utterances spoken well before or perhaps even after the one in question.

The interpersonal content and patterning of exchanges and larger stretches of discourse is not, of course, always just a matter of the relationship between participants. As Berry and also Labov and Fanshel have demonstrated, speakers adopt roles not only with respect to each other, but also with respect to what they are talking about (Berry op. cit. Labov and Fanshel op. cit.). Where two speakers are concerned, Labov and Fanshel have shown that there may be agreement or disagreement about the distribution of these roles. Where there is disagreement, the speakers vie with each other for the status of primary knower. Whether this state of affairs changes or remains constant, it provides another kind of semantic structuring of discourse.

Wells and Montgomery maintain that the connecting networks outlined above are not obligatory rules, but rather guiding principles. They claim that this view is supported by the conception of Sacks and other such analysts of conversation who view disregard of these guiding principles as notable absences, for which speakers can be held accountable (Sacks 1974). They claim support also from Grice's notion of conversational co-operativeness (Grice 1975). These guiding principles operate in an anticipatory way for speakers and retrospectively for listeners.

Moves by one speaker set up strong or weak anticipatory constraints on the options available to the next speaker and consequently on how we hear or interpret whatever subsequent moves take place.

(Wells and Montgomery 1981, p.19)

I have omitted any reference to Wells and Montgomery's notion of incorporation at this level, as this appears to be an aspect of the realization of semantic structure. It will therefore be dealt with under the heading of structural configurations.

These findings on the semantic structure of the exchange are summarised in tables 4.1 and 4.2 below.

Table 4.1

The semantic structure of the exchange in informal conversation (to be construed as guiding principles rather than firm rules)

<u>Ideational</u>	Propositions spread over the exchange in a variety of ways; ideational interdependence between utterances within the exchange.
<u>Inter-personal</u>	Through reciprocal discourse roles interpersonal interdependence operates between utterances within the exchange; participants take complementary, similar or conflicting roles in terms of their status as knowers.

Table 4.2

The semantic structure of larger discourse units in informal conversation (to be construed as guiding principles rather than firm rules)

<u>Ideational</u>	Ideational interdependence between utterances at some distance from each other.
<u>Inter-personal</u>	Through reciprocal discourse roles inter-personal interdependence operates between utterances at some distance from each other; participants take complementary, similar or conflicting roles in terms of their status as knowers.

The structural configurations of the exchange and of larger discourse units

I must note at this point that Halliday's three-dimensional model needs to be modified to deal with discourse structure, especially at the level of structural configurations. For the features we are concerned with here are all features of theme - features whose role it is to realize semantic connections between utterances. Features of transitivity and mood have no such discursive function. Yet what is meant by 'theme' in this chapter is rather different from what was meant by the term in Chapter 3. Theme at the sentence level (the concern of the last chapter) was presented as having two components - functional sentence perspective and cohesion. The first component is obviously not relevant here since it concerns intra-sentential relations. The second component, cohesion, is in contrast, centrally relevant, since it constitutes an interface between the individual utterance and the larger whole. Cohesive devices exist within the structure of individual utterances but function over whole texts. They can be studied from both angles. In Chapter 3, I examine them in the course of a study of individual utterances. In revealing which features of the utterance have a connective function, such a study can add only to our information about individual utterances. It is as if we were examining the coupling devices on a railway coach as part of the coach structure.

But only if we examine the same features from the point of view of the structure of the whole train, or the whole text, can we get an understanding of their function, an awareness of how different devices operate in different ways to make different kinds of connections

between the elements in large and complex structures. From this point of view we can present the cohesive devices explicated by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as being of two kinds - those that serve to enable a text to hold together and those that indicate a precise relationship of one part to another. Lexical cohesion, reference, substitution and ellipsis belong to the former kind. They combine to realize the inter-connectedness of text, indicating semantic coherence underneath and thus inviting participants (or witnesses) to investigate the semantic interdependence of utterances by construing some in the light of others. But Halliday and Hasan's fifth category, which covers those conjunctions that are placed in the initial or final position of an utterance, is rather different. Such non-internal conjunctions do more than realize interconnectedness: they indicate the logical and psychological relations between different parts of a text and so function as joints rather than the connective tissue of the other cohesive devices. All these devices operate within exchanges and also across larger stretches of text.

Rich though it is, Halliday and Hasan's account of cohesive devices is not exhaustive. Subsequent work by other researchers, for example Stubbs' work on sentence adverbs, has added new categories to their original five (Stubbs 1983). Moreover the taxonomy of Halliday and Hasan is principally derived from the study of written texts. But recent work on oral discourse has brought to light a number of other features which serve similar functions in the discourse of informal conversation. It has also shown that ellipsis operates in a very specific way in conversation that is rather different from its role in written text. I will begin by examining the operation of ellipsis in informal conversation and then examine the other features.

Coulthard and Brazil (1981) have observed that one of the significant features of the exchange is increasing ellipticity. This appears to be particularly true of informal conversation, where such ellipticity appears to be a very strong guiding principle, making it perhaps the most pervasive and expected discourse feature. A second speaker's failure to produce a properly elliptical response to a first speaker's initiating utterance, is likely to be construed as an attempt to move the conversation towards formality.

Intonation also plays an important part in patterning the conversational exchange. The rules for using intonation to combine smaller tone units into larger structures have not yet been extensively studied. However, the patterning of tone sequences in questioning exchanges has received some attention (O'Connor and Arnold 1975, Brazil, Coulthard and Johns 1980). It appears that such patterns play an essential part in structuring informal conversations since they indicate exchange boundaries by showing whether a response is to be construed as concluding the exchange or inviting confirmation in the form of feedback.

Intonation patterns clearly play an important part in realizing discourse structure in conversation. In particular a low pitch in the final position of one tone unit, followed by a high pitch in the initial position of the next tone unit indicates a boundary of some sort. Variations in the degree of contrast in such pitch changes, together with the less thoroughly studied use of pause and stress, can be taken to indicate a subtle hierarchy of structures.

The intonation patterns of listing have also been studied and have been shown to operate across a number of semantically and syntactically parallel utterances (O'Connor 1973). They seem to

indicate that the utterances are bound together not into an exchange, but into a move.

A rather less widespread discourse feature is the joint production of utterances. As Stubbs observes, where one speaker provides a syntactically and semantically acceptable completion of an utterance begun by another this is a strong indication of mental alignment since it requires close understanding and split second timing (Stubbs 1983).

Incorporation, or the repetition of words and phrases, is more common. Wells and Montgomery (1981) have noted that it operates not only within the exchange but also over larger stretches of discourse, even whole conversations. It is clearly related to Halliday and Hasan's lexical cohesion but covers rather different territory (Halliday and Hasan 1976). It is both narrower, since it excludes collocation, and broader, since it includes the re-iteration of whole phrases. As Wells and Montgomery have noted, incorporation is a commonplace feature of conversation between parents and young children, varying in characteristic ways between families. A speaker incorporates sometimes part of her own earlier utterance, sometimes part of another speaker's utterance. Without the co-occurrence of other discourse features, such repetition establishes inter-connectedness only, rather than any more precise, deeper or more structural relation.

The final two features operate over larger units of discourse than the exchange. Stubbs' sentence adverbs make links between exchanges more precise and structural than those established by incorporation. While there is little evidence to indicate that all the words and phrases Stubbs cites are frequently used in informal conversation, yet

there are some items of this sort which would seem to be heavily used. Words, phrases and clauses such as 'anyhow', 'for a start', 'to cut a long story short' and 'as I was saying' seem to be much used in informal conversation between adults. It seems that such items have a clear function in indicating linkages and movements to higher or lower levels of abstraction. But it also appears that a narrower and rather different range is used in conversation from that of written discourse.

Particles are very widely used in conversation. Items such as 'well', 'right', 'O.K.' and 'so' pepper informal talk. As Schegloff and Sacks observe, these normally occur in conversation at a point where one topic has been completed. They serve to indicate, or even to permit, the initiation of a new topic, one that cannot be predicted from what has gone before (Schegloff and Sacks 1973).

In tables 4.3 and 4.4 below I summarise these findings to show the devices that are used to structure conversation into the semantic patterns identified in Section 2.2 of this chapter.

Table 4.3

Features that realize exchange structure in informal conversation

<u>Ideational</u>	Increasing ellipticity over exchange; some utterances jointly produced; some incorporate elements of other utterances by same or other participant; use of reference, substitution, ellipsis and lexical cohesion; use of conjunctions.
<u>Inter-personal</u>	Use of pitch movements; use of pause and stress.

Table 4.4

Features that realize the structure of larger discourse units in informal conversation

<u>Ideational</u>	Some utterances incorporate elements of other utterances by same or other participant; use of reference, substitution, ellipsis and lexical cohesion; use of conjunctions; use of sentence adverbs; use of particles.
<u>Inter-personal</u>	Use of pitch movements; use of pause and stress.

2.4

Summary of a systemic view of the discourse structure of informal conversation

From this examination we can conclude that informal conversation, which may appear disordered in comparison with the orderly coherence of many written texts, has its own semantic patterning. This is realized with great subtlety and effectiveness by a number of devices (as yet only partially documented) at the level of structural configurations.

Despite this patterning, informal conversation proceeds relatively unpredictably. It is permitted for the participants to change roles, shift topics, pick up old roles or return to old topics. This unpredictability is limited by two factors. Firstly there are the relatively strict rules governing the openings and closings of conversations. Secondly, the choice of topic and roles is limited by the relationship operating between the participants and also by their perception of the situation in which they are conversing and its relation to a larger social world. There are many turnings in a conversation that cannot be taken because of the force of the social

knowledge governing the participants' actions. Thus the order and structure of informal conversation derive not only from its internal coherence but also from external social constraints.

3

The structure of contemporary prose fiction

3.1

Preliminary discussion

The analysis of oral discourse may be a relatively recent enterprise, but the analysis of written discourse has a long history. While the coherence of oral discourse has been, until recently, a matter of intuitive recognition alone, unsupported by theoretical frameworks or organised empirical evidence, the coherence of written discourse and more specifically the structure of particular varieties of written discourse has been explored from Aristotle onwards.

3.1.1

Opportunities and pressures for coherence in written language

Not only has coherence been more easily studied in written than in oral language: there have also been greater opportunities and pressures for its existence in the first place. Taking the opportunities first, it is obvious but nonetheless significant, that the possibilities for order and structure are greater for the writer than for the participant in informal conversation. A writer can read what she has written, and ponder what should come next with a deliberation not available in informal conversation. And as Goody has emphasised, what is set down on paper becomes manipulable and open to revision and re-ordering (Goody 1977). The writer is able not only to

revise the words written down but to add, subtract and change the order of phrases, clauses, sentences and paragraphs precisely so as to create a coherent structured whole.

For behind this opportunity there is a pressure. The mature writer (and in varying degrees the immature writer also) knows that the reader coming to the text is unlikely to be able to ask her for clarification or be given the necessary repair for any misunderstandings. The reader may not share much of the writer's experience or patterns of understanding. I have argued in Chapter 3 that this communicative context means that there are greater pressures on the writer to be explicit and to pack each utterance with verbal information. It also means that there are pressures on the writer to order and structure a text in such a way that the reader can use parts of it to gloss other parts, can understand what is important and what is less so. The writer is unlikely to be at hand to correct any misunderstanding about such relationships and so the structure must be evident in the text itself.

The absence of intonation is another pressure. I have noted in Chapter 3 that this absence affects the way in which the thematic structure of the utterance is realized in written texts by throwing the information load onto the syntax. This absence also affects the discourse structure of a written text: other means have to be used to realize the larger patterns created by pitch, pause and stress, which, as we have seen, also function at ranks higher than the utterance, both separating the component parts of oral discourse and binding them into appreciable wholes.

The choice of contemporary prose fiction as a relevant exemplar of the extreme written variety

These opportunities and pressures exist for all extended forms of continuous writing. But as I have stated in Section 1 of this Chapter, I am concerned here with only one variety of written language, namely contemporary prose fiction. The category 'extreme written variety' established in Chapter 3 which has a substantial validity at the rank of the sentence has little validity beyond this, since, as is widely recognised, there exist markedly different varieties of written text with distinct structural patterning. I have chosen prose fiction as more appropriate to my purpose than other genres such as scientific prose or political polemic for three reasons. My first reason is that, as Bruner observes, the connection between intention and outcome that runs through fictional narrative appears to be more accessible and interesting to young children than the connection of cause and effect that shapes other forms of the extreme written variety (Bruner 1984). My second reason is that most of the material presented to children for the purpose of initiating them into the written word, can be classed as prose fiction. Of course contemporary prose fiction written for adults, is far more complex and demanding of the reader than any reading primer or picture book. But it is not totally distinct from its junior counterparts. Setting the structure of the novel against what we know of the structure of informal conversation may reveal differences which can illuminate some of the problems of learning to read. The validity of this approach is tested in Chapter 5. My third reason for choosing contemporary prose fiction is that its structure has been greatly

illuminated in recent years.

3.1.3

The organisation of this section

What follows is an evaluative survey of work that throws light on the structure of contemporary prose fiction. Much seminal work has focussed on other varieties of narrative fiction but nonetheless illuminates the structure of the variety under examination here, just as Labov & Fanshel's work on therapeutic interviews has developed our understanding of informal conversation. So I begin this survey in Section 3.2 with an examination of Propp's influential study of the Russian folk tale. Section 3.3 examines what can be learnt about narrative from the work of the story grammarians. Section 3.4 considers the contributions made by the structuralist school of literary theory, beginning with work on the structure of the text and moving on to a consideration of the structuring qualities of the relationship between the reader and the text. Section 3.5 considers phenomenological and related views of the reader's interaction with the text. Section 3.6 summarises the contribution of these findings to an understanding of the structure of contemporary prose narrative.

3.2

Propp's study of the Russian folk tale

Vladimir Propp's pioneering study, *The Morphology of the Folk Tale* (Propp 1958) is considered by literary theorists of the structuralist school to be the point of departure for the study of plot, and by those cognitive psychologists who class themselves as story grammarians, to be the first serious attempt to characterise the

significant features of a form that can tell us much about the structure of the human mind (Todovov 1966, Barthes 1975, Culler 1975, Bower 1976, Beaugrande and Colby 1979).

Propp argues that the concept of morphology can be usefully extrapolated and applied to the study of the folk tale, thereby giving such a study the scientific quality previously lacking.

In order to justify his approach, Propp appeals not only to the procedures of biology, but, in the company of his colleagues of the Russian Formalist school, also to the procedures and categories of linguistics. For the pre-occupation of this school is with the techniques by which literary language works and which set it off from the language of everyday transactions. Thus Propp's work has relevance for all concerned with what it is that sets literature apart from everyday conversation. In his examination of folk tales he sees that the parts and their relationships form the fundamental abstract basis of the tale, just as grammar forms the abstract substratum of the living language.

Propp's corpus is limited to Russian folk tales of the 'quest' type. For these he specifies clearly thirty-one possible constituent parts or functions. For example his Function no. 15 consists of the hero being transferred, delivered or led to the object of search. Propp then postulates four alternative combinatory rules which operate to select and organise subsets from the thirty-one specified functions. These rules account for all the tales under study.

His thirty one functions deal with events and states which are closely defined in terms of the characters, their motivations and perceptions. The relationships of the characters to each other and to the listener/reader, in terms of antagonism or sympathy, form an

integral part of the definitions of the various functions. Motive and affect are foregrounded in his descriptions, together with intricate details of physical characteristics and circumstances. Such concrete detail limits the applicability of Propp's rule systems.

Functions like no. 14

The hero acquires the use of a magical agent

(Propp 1958 p.43)

or the culminating function no. 31

The hero is married and ascends the throne

(Propp 1958 p.63)

clearly play little part in contemporary prose fiction. Magic of any sort is rare these days. Where it does occur, it is not the magic of these functions. The magic of Salman Rushdie's novels is antonomous and anarchic, not a convenient tool at the disposal of the hero or villain (Rushdie 1981, 1983). The telepathic voices Salaam hears, the 'All India Radio' in his head cannot be directed to his own ends. And Rushdie is untypical of contemporary writers in making any use of magic at all. As for happy endings that involve marriage and an ascent to the throne, these are rarer still. But the idea that narratives are constructed from functional elements defined in terms of their relation to the rest of the sequence and combined in rule-bound ways, is potentially applicable to all narrative texts and has informed a vast amount of investigation into texts considerably more varied in their length, complexity and time and place of origin than those studied by Propp.

3.3

Story grammar

In the last ten years interest in narrative has become widespread among many groups on both sides of the Atlantic and including cognitive psychologists in the United States. They have taken ideas derived directly from Propp and attempted to carry them into the psychology laboratory. Like Propp they stay with the simpler structures of the folk tale. But unlike Propp they are intent on investigating not the structure of the folk-tale per se but such matters as what it is that makes some stories more memorable than others (Bower 1976, Mandler and Johnson 1977, Rumelhart 1977, 1980, Thorndyke 1977). Their approach is based on the premise that comprehension and memory are interactive processes, in which expectations based on past experiences and the structure of the present material combine to guide the process of understanding. Many attempts have been made to define the narrative structure which through its presence in the mind and the text, contributes to facilitating the understanding and memorising of the experimental material. This material is usually a deliberately constructed approximation of the folk tale, or some deliberately manipulated variant. The definitions of narrative structure take the form of sets of rules specifying, like Propp's, the elements of the story and their relation to each other. But there are two significant departures from Propp's morphology in this approach.

The first difference is that the grammars constructed are tested not against a known body of narrative material, but against the extent to which experimental subjects can, without significant distortion or omission, recall and reconstruct stories differing from each other

only (supposedly) in the degree to which they conform to the grammar under investigation. Positive findings are taken as essential validations of the grammar. They result from the performance of subjects of different ages in tests of immediate and delayed recall, and of reconstruction of stories selected or constructed specifically for the purpose of the investigation.

Generally speaking the experimental subjects make fewer omissions or alterations with those stories conforming most closely to the grammars (Bower 1976, Thorndyke 1973). In other experiments where subjects of different ages are presented with 'well-formed' stories to recall, it has been found that all subjects show a marked tendency to omit or alter only those elements occupying relatively insignificant positions in the story's grammatical structure (Mandler and Johnson 1977).

The story grammarians' explanation for the results, is that the reader or listener's knowledge of story grammar provides her with the necessary expectations concerning the elements to be encountered in the text and their paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. These expectations act in a top-down fashion, enabling the reader/listener to assign values to the incoming information and to make necessary inferences.

The second significant difference from Propp's work is that most of the story grammars take the form of Chomskyan 'rewrite' rules or tree diagrams. Those of the story grammarians that follow this approach are intent on constructing a syntactic system that excludes any consideration of story semantics. The grammars produced in pursuit of this attempt are consequently far more abstract and detached from any consideration of human sympathies and antagonisms

than are the functions of Propp's morphology. Propp's functions have a concrete and value-laden quality, as exemplified in Function no. 16.

The hero and villain join in direct combat"

(Propp 1958 p.50)

But the remote abstraction of the story grammarians is typified by Mandler and Johnson's Rule no. 9

Simple reaction → internal event
((Cause internal event)n)
(Mandler and Johnson 1977 p.117)

This attempt to eschew all semantic specification is not entirely successful. All story grammars include the notion of a 'goal' or desirable outcome. Indeed they are largely and inevitably shaped in terms of this essentially semantic element. For a goal is not merely a neutral state that is brought about as a result of a series of events connected in a chain of cause and effect. It is a desirable state - the state towards which the central character's actions are directed. Mandler and Johnson define it as an 'internal state', but this is clearly an inadequate definition, as one can think of a number of internal states such as confusion, indecision or loss which do not and could not function as goals in stories. Rumelhart, Thorndyke and Bower all define a goal as a 'desired state'. This raises further unanswered semantic questions such as which character desires it? What precipitates the desire for it? Unlike Mandler and Johnson, Rumelhart, Thorndyke and Bower do specify the existence of characters in their grammars, but only as an undifferentiated constituent of the setting. There is no reference to their possession of positive or negative values nor to the presence of problems prompting the choice of a goal and initiating the subsequent event structure.

From such non-semantic grammars one can, of course, derive

meaningless stories. However those used in their empirical investigations all involve central characters to whom a clear value is attached, who are presented with clearly recognisable problems and who work towards goals which are clearly desirable. Thus these grammarians are applying semantic rules not specified in their grammars.

Mandler and Johnson, Rumelhart, Thorndyke and Bower are concerned to arrive at a theoretical description of the story itself, rather than an account of the processes of telling and understanding stories (Beaugrande and Colby 1979). This is not true of Beaugrande and Colby who are concerned to specify what they see as the distinct but complementary sets of rules or 'data formats' that underlie the telling and understanding of stories. Citing Levi Strauss' criticism of Propp that a pre-occupation with abstract units shows that stories have recurrent parts but not how each story is individually constructed and construed, they argue that abstract taxonomies such as those of Thorndyke and Mandler and Johnson

... seem to impoverish the model of understanding to the degree that narrating and audience response lose significant qualitative differentiations.

(Beaugrande and Colby 1979 p.58)

Beaugrande and Colby see story understanding as modelled on a continuum of process interactions that operate in a top-down fashion. These are derived from a consideration of general human data-processing capacities, as they appear to be invoked or employed in the construction or construing of stories held to be interesting.

They maintain that the reader/listener does not merely apply a previously learned schema to the incoming data in a grid-like fashion. Instead she is involved in constant prediction of what might happen. Nor is she alone in this activity.

All the participants in narrating - the narrator, the audience and the narrated characters are probably engaged much of the time in complex activities of planning and predicting.

(Beaugrande and Colby op. cit. p.44)

This prediction takes the form of problem solving and it is the nature of this activity, they claim, that makes some stories more interesting than others.

Not only is their concern with process as well as product a departure from the work of earlier grammarians, so too is the question that frames their investigation. They ask not 'What makes a story memorable?' but 'What makes a story interesting?'. To answer this question they recognise that semantics must be brought into play as well as syntax. They maintain that if the reader/listener is to be interested in following the attempts of the central character to overcome the problems that stand between him and his goal state, it is essential that positive and negative values be assigned to the story characters. They also argue that another factor contributing to the interest of the reader/listener, is awareness of the possibility of a number of different action sequences, only one of which actually takes place. They maintain that the degree of interest which a story holds for the reader/listener depends on the constellation of such interactive character tracks.

In foregrounding these semantic elements they claim that they are exploring issues which a "human-like story system" ought to encompass, but which have not been the main focus of models since Propp. This dual shift from a concern with a value-free syntax to a concern with the semantics of story, and from a focus on product to a focus on process, moves us towards a richer conception of narrative fiction and of the processes involved in construing it. But we are still a very

long way from understanding the complexities of the structure of the novel. Surely there is more to the novel than interaction, even if this is taken to mean both the interaction between the characters and the interaction between the reader and text, if interaction is construed simply as the reader's prediction of the sequence of events.

The picture we get of the structure of narrative texts from most of these studies of story grammar, is literal, thin and removed from our own experiences of novel reading. Stories are presented as straightforward structures whose simple linear patterning, operating in a chain of cause and effect, is fully apparent on a quick first reading. They are seen as quite independent of the cultures from which they emerge since they can be 'successfully' transmitted and 'fully' explored in what seems to the outsider as the bizarre setting of the psychology laboratory, where the physical context and social relations that surround the telling are not regarded as significant. Products of culture are examined as if they were products of nature. Yet these findings are not totally irrelevant to a study of narrative structure.

The story grammarians explore the 'fit' between narrative structure and the human mind. Although their material is far removed from the complexities of the novel and although much of their work is flawed by a simplistic reductionism, nevertheless it provides an important reminder that the mature human mind is predisposed to order and structure of the type found in narrative and that the mature reader/hearer brings to the narrative text certain structural expectations which shape the act of construing the narrative. The work of Beaugrande and Colby provides the richest version of this view in showing that these expectations of narrative are complex: they

involve semantic as well as syntactic relationships and are generated in a constantly changing succession of alternative possibilities.

3.4

The structuralist school of literary theory

In my brief account of story grammar I have argued that there has been a move from an exclusive concern with story as product to a wider concern that includes the processes of composing and understanding stories. Among the structuralist school of literary theory there has been a similar shift from a narrow concern with the structures inherent in the text to a wider concern with the structures created by the reader.

3.4.1

Structure within the narrative text

The interests and methodology of the structuralist school are very different from those of the story grammarians. Where the story grammarians have contented themselves with a reductive view of the folk tale and of how it is construed, the architects of the structuralist school of literary theory have been chiefly concerned to construct a grammar of plot and to identify the devices that signal to us that we are in the presence of narrative. Like Propp they examine real narratives, not texts deliberately constructed or adapted for their purpose. But their net has been cast much more widely than his: they have examined such texts as Boccaccio's Decameron and Ian Fleming's Goldfinger. Propp's influence on their work has been powerful, so too have the ideas of the linguists Saussure and Jakobson together with others of the Russian formalist school (Saussure 1916,

Jakobson 1962).

Two ideas from Saussure's work have been of particular importance to structuralists working in all areas of investigation, not just those concerned with literary theory. The first is binary opposition which Saussure sees as governing relationships at levels as varied as the phonemic and that of language itself, where *langue*, the underlying system is set in contrast to *parole*, or language in utterance. The second idea is the contrast between syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations. Both of these powerful ideas underlie all structuralist thinking.

The influence of Jakobson and other Russian formalists has been more specific on those structuralists concerned with literary theory. Underlying their work is his view of 'poetic' language as auto-referential, pointing not outwards to the context in which it exists, but inwards to its own self. Members of the structuralist school follow Jakobson and the other Russian Formalists in proposing that linguistic analysis provides a method for discovering the patterns of literary texts and thus a means of answering such questions as How can we define narrative? What are the basic units of fiction? How are these structured? Their chief interest lies in exploring whether written narratives, particularly novels, can themselves be termed structures, and if so how these can be typified. So they are looking not merely for the functional elements in simple folk tales. Their search for structure involves an examination of complex and varied narratives to see whether they exist as autonomous entities, exhibiting the three properties which Piaget sees to be of criterial significance in the classification of an entity as a structure.

In short the notion of structure is comprised of three key ideas: the idea of wholeness, the idea of transformation and the idea of self-regulation.
(Piaget 1971 p.5)

The structuralists examine narrative not in isolation, but as part of a wider intellectual endeavour in which the idea of structure is explored in the worlds of linguistics, psychoanalysis and anthropology as well as in the study of literature. Propp is recognised by the structuralist school of literary theory as an important fore-runner, but not as the isolated father-figure he appears to be for the story grammarians.

Each of the major structuralists whose work I examine draws on these ideas to create a rather different account of the structure of narrative. In the view I present of their accounts, I have selected those aspects of description that provide the clearest and most valid contrast with the discourse structure of informal conversation.

Greimas reduces Propp's 31 functions to 20 by applying the structuralist notion of binary opposition (Greimas 1970). He also postulates combinatory rules to produce story structures analogous to sentence structures. The resultant grammar has a quality of abstractness and generality that makes it an applicable but not very informative account of narrative structure.

Todorov too owes a large debt to Propp's Morphology (Todorov 1966, 1969). But instead of a rigorously elegant simplification of Propp's model, he constructs something richer and more complex, that can provide more information about a wider variety of texts than Greimas' grammar can.

Todorov's conception of the structure of the narrative is an account of more than the plot outline. One important contribution he makes to the study of narrative is the distinction he proposes between

histoire and discours. In this view, taken up and developed by many structuralists, the histoire or story is the sequence of narrated events which lies inside the discours or narrative. The story stands as referential object, whereas the narrative is the rhetoric of the narrator, shaping the story according to its own conventions. The story has its own syntax: propositions are combined into sequences in specified rule-bound ways.

But Todorov is also concerned with what he terms the verbal aspect - the manipulation of words and phrases. He maintains that narrative structure does not consist in the skeletal form of the story alone: the literary text is totally significant and totally structured. One cannot hope to arrive at an adequate account of narrative by reducing it to an articulation of its story content.

The other contribution that Todorov makes to an enlarged sense of narrative is in his conceptualisation of literary genre. Todorov explores the idea, surely crucial to a theory of modern narrative fiction, that writing takes place in the light of other writing, which stands as langue to the parole of the individual work. However, each work is not only the product of a genre but is also capable of modifying the definition of that genre. Genres themselves exist in terms of the wider culture and are culture-bound, relative phenomena. The notion of what is a novel is a function both of the novels that have been written and of the society in which they were or are written. So for Todorov the narrative is structured partly by the syntax, or plot, which shapes the story at its heart, partly by the verbal aspect of the narrator's rhetoric and partly by an evolving concept of the genre of the novel which provides an external shaping influence.

These ideas certainly add to an understanding of contemporary prose fiction: Every novel or short story is clearly made up of story and narrative, and equally clearly the product of a genre. In spy stories such as Anthony Price's Our Man in Camelot the narrative is subservient to the highly complex story, whereas in a novel such as William Golding's Rites of Passage it is the intensity of the author's vision as communicated in the narrative that binds the novel together and makes it what it is (Price 1975, Golding 1980). Both works are the products of genres, the spy story and the psychological novel, but both in some measure make subtle changes to these genres.

Kristeva brings to the study of the novel the notion of intertextuality (Kristeva 1969). Whereas Todorov sees the genre of any novel as langue to the particular novel's parole, Kristeva sees a rather different kind of dependency. Every text contains a multitude of citations, taking forms as varied as echoes and explicit references, by which other texts are absorbed and transformed. Thus no text is free of other texts and no text can be fully read without the reader bringing to bear her knowledge of other texts. This idea, which permeates the work of Barthes and other structuralists is a powerful addition to our understanding of the structure of contemporary prose fiction. Thus the interweaving of references to the Morte d'Arthur with echoes of other twentieth century spy stories contributes to the particular coherence of Our Man in Camelot (Price 1975). The French Lieutenant's Woman is shaped in large part by the host of explicit references to nineteenth century texts as varied as Tennyson's In Memoriam and the Parliamentary Report on Children's Employment of 1867, and also by the suffusion of echoes of Shakespearian comedies as master and servant pursue their amorous

adventures above and below stairs (Fowles 1969).

Barthes shows us further layers and threads of complexity in the structure of narrative (Barthes 1974, 1975). In his earlier work, heavily influenced by the Russian Formalists, he adopts a strongly linguistic approach: he sees the aim of a structuralist literary theory as the mastery of the infinity of texts through the description of the language of which they are the product and from which they can be generated (Barthes 1975). He is concerned to construct a grammar or set of structural rules that can encompass a larger set of narratives than those allowed for by Propp's Morphology or the grammars of Greimas and Todorov, one that can cast its net over the complexities of the modern novel. In order to achieve this at the level of functions he identifies two categories of events - those central to the story, linked together in a chain of cause and effect, and those with a more peripheral parasitic function. The two sets are termed nuclei and catalysts respectively (subsequently kernels and satellites). The nuclei or kernels cannot be deleted without altering the story, whereas the catalysts or satellites cannot be deleted without altering the narrative.

The classification of events as kernels or satellites has been taken up and developed by other structuralists and yields useful structural information about contemporary prose fiction (Chatman 1978, Genette 1980). Its relevance is not confined to novels: short stories also have their kernels and satellites. Whereas in Propp's folk tales every event has a functional relationship to the story, in Angus Wilson's After the Show only some events are of this kernel type (Wilson 1972). When Maurice picks up the telephone he sets in train a sequence of events that constitutes the story, but when Mrs Liebig

moves one or two of the daffodils in the vases or draws the velvet curtains to shut out the spring evening, nothing happens. Yet to eliminate these events would be to limit our understanding of Mrs Liebig and her relationship to Maurice, and thus to alter the narrative.

In his later work, most notably in S/Z (1974), Barthes' direction has shifted from the search for the essential unchanging structure of narrative to a pursuit of multiplicity. He is concerned to document the variety of structures that can be found within a single narrative. He identifies a number of highly conventionalised devices which act as agencies to generate and modify the meanings of which narrative is essentially composed. These devices he terms codes and specifies five that operate in the novel - the proairetic, the hermeneutic, the semic, the symbolic and the cultural. The proairetic (the code of actions) and the symbolic represent another way of conceptualising plot, or story. The cultural code concerns the use the author makes of what is taken to be common knowledge. Whereas Todorov's conception of genre embodies a view of the wider culture shaping the narrative, Barthes' cultural code embodies a view of the narrative manipulating the reader's knowledge of the culture in which she lives. Thus Edmund Talbot writing to his godfather in Rites of Passage draws on a familiarity with classical authors, with lines of Keats and with the Church of England view of Methodists, all within a single page (Golding 1980).

However it is perhaps with the proposal of the semic and the hermeneutic codes that Barthes brings his greatest innovation to the study of narrative. The semic code is a code of connotations that uses hints and flickers of meaning, to inform the reader chiefly about

characters and their thematic significance.

The hermeneutic code is the code of the mystification and implicit promise of demystification that are woven into the narrative and is thus closely intertwined with the proairetic, the code of actions. But whereas the proairetic is concerned with the unfolding of action, the role of the hermeneutic is to set up delays in the flow of the discourse and thus to create tension. It clearly figures large in the structure of the spy novel where it is the promise of discovering who is really doing what that carries the reader forward. But it is by no means confined to this genre. In other novels and in short stories the mystery may concern psychological states, relationships between characters, or personal histories. The whole of The French Lieutenant's Woman can be seen as the slow and richly textured unfolding of explanation and understanding of the dark motionless figure standing at the end of the Cobb gazing out to sea that is shown to the reader at the book's beginning (Fowles 1969).

The narrative is the product of the interplay between these codes, and thus is capable of an infinite set of patterns. Barthes sees each individual narrative as an essentially ambiguous structure, rich in an array of potential meanings. The actual meanings realized vary with each reader and each reading in ways that are explored in the following section.

Genette's conception of the novel's structure is more consistently dualistic than Barthes' (Genette 1980). For Genette the novel is an interpretation of a story through a particular consciousness at a particular time. One of the ways in which contemporary fiction differs from the folk tale is in the manipulation of time relations. Other significant differences are mood and voice.

All contribute significantly to its structure. In his specification of these structural features, Genette is more concerned to typify variety than to characterise the essential structure of the novel. He claims that variety is achieved precisely through varying the content under these headings: varying the time relations means varying the relations between the order, duration and frequency of the events represented and of the representations of these. The temporal stance of a narrative is the product of all three. Variations in mood and voice are neatly disentangled by Genette and concern variation on the one hand in the point of view that orients the narrative's perspective, and on the other in the identity of the narrator and the relationship between the narrator and what is narrated in terms of time, narrative level and person. Thus a short story such as Kingsley Amis' Interesting Things can be typified in terms of mood as sharply focalised through one character, Gloria Davies, although the narrator tells what Gloria sees and thinks from a later time and in the third person (Amis 1972).

Genette examines with an intricately meticulous methodology, the various permutations which these variables make possible. However he does not claim that such an analysis tells us all about what the novel or short story can be or what a particular work of fiction is. The reader too plays a significant part.

The real author of the narrative is not only he who tells it,
but also and at times even more, he who hears it
(Genette 1980 p.262)

The structure of the narrative inheres not only in the words of the text but also in the mind of the reader. Genette, like Barthes, sees the role of the reader as centrally relevant to the structure of the narrative in ways that will be explored shortly. But meanwhile we

should note that his delineation of the structural frameworks provided by the time relations and by mood and voice considerably enhances our understanding of the structure of contemporary fiction.

The structuralist view of literature is not, of course, confined to France. Culler has both explicated and criticised the ideas of the French theorists (Culler 1975). He sees the models of Greimas, Todorov and Barthes as lacking in empirical validation since they are nowhere tested against significant sets of novels and non-novels. Culler argues that as a result of such methodological limitation their theories constitute applicable sets of rules, but are still not sufficiently refined to account for what we know intuitively to be valid and invalid instances of the novel. They tell the truth but not the whole truth. Culler maintains that even Barthes' later model is insufficiently informative. His codes are neither exhaustive nor sufficient, since there is no code relating to the act of narration itself. Thus the model excludes what we know intuitively to be the case - that readers can characterise narrators. However Genette's concerns with mood and voice would seem to make good this omission in a way not recognised by Culler.

In the United States Chatman writes as a structuralist of a rather different sort (Chatman 1978). He has constructed a rather narrower adaptation of Propp's model than those of the French structuralist school. Like Propp, Chatman is principally concerned with the patterning of plot which he sees in terms of events, characters and elements of setting, and the ways in which these are related to one another. He follows Barthes in categorising the events and their associated characters and elements of setting as either kernels or satellites. However for Chatman the relation between story and

narrative is simpler than it is for Barthes. Chatman maintains that the same story can be narrated in different ways, but remains constant at the heart of each narration. The narrator, whether film-maker, choreographer or novelist (for Chatman is not concerned with literature alone) takes the central story, then selects and orders the elements, presenting them in a connected sequence of statements of process and stasis.

Dualism, central to structuralist theory of narrative, has been criticised by Herrnstein Smith who argues that the notion of an unchanging story realised in a number of different narratives, does not bear close examination (Herrnstein Smith 1981). What Chatman maintains are different versions of the same story, Herrnstein Smith sees as different stories. She argues that stories and narratives cannot be usefully characterised in such a sparsely dualistic manner as Chatman uses: the purposes and interests the narrator has in telling a story must be incorporated into any classificatory description since these have a highly significant shaping and interpretive function.

Herrnstein Smith construes the term 'story' to mean more than the bare sequence of events that the structuralists intend by the term. She cannot admit to an answer to the question What is happening? that does not also answer the question What is this story about? In other words plot for her is essentially intertwined with theme, what the narrator tells, with why she is telling it. For Herrnstein Smith then, there can be no bare sequence of events that is not imbued with the narrator's values. As Yeats put it in Among School Children:

How can we tell the dancer from the dance?

(Yeats 1950 p.245)

Certainly to know the choreographic pattern of the steps is not to

apprehend the totality of the dance. But if we are to understand the relationship between narratives, or even the structural complexity of a particular narrative, the conception of an event structure or story, is useful, provided that one is aware that any realization of the story will be shaped by the values of the narrator, just as any realization of a dance is shaped by the dancers.

3.4.2

The reader's interaction with narrative text

As I have shown, the search for narrative structure undertaken by the literary theorists of the structuralist school has not been a straightforward matter. The certain simplicities of Propp's functions and combinatorial laws have been overlaid with complex ramifications, multi-level interpretations and disconcerting ambiguities as structuralists have endeavoured to throw a semiotic net over the work of such writers as Boccaccio, Balzac, Ian Fleming and Proust (Todorov 1969, Barthes 1974, 1975, Genette 1980).

Increasingly a full description of narrative structure has been seen to necessitate more than an examination of the text alone. Genres in narrative are recognised as cultural phenomena which rise, develop and fade with the larger culture of the society in which they are produced. Texts also draw on cultural knowledge, both of objects, people and the patterning of events in 'real life' through Barthes' cultural code and also knowledge of other texts through Kristeva's intertextuality (Barthes 1974, Kristeva 1969). Such knowledge significantly influences the way in which the reader construes the text, the structures which she responds to and validates with her reading.

No two readers share an identical cultural knowledge and so no two readers can be shaped in the same way by the structures of the text. Codes and the other extraordinarily complex patterns revealed by Barthes and his fellow structuralists, are only latent or potential structures. If Barthes is right and surely he must be - in maintaining that a narrative is essentially about meaning and not events, then one must recognise that such meaning is realized not in the printed words on the page, but in the construction the reader makes as she reads.

This has two consequences. Firstly it makes impossible the definitive delineation of a narrative's structure: the critic's role is transformed into uncovering a multitude of readings, some as Todorov notes, richer than others, but none the definitive reading. Secondly it enlarges the focus of study to include the reading procedures employed in the reader's construction of the narrative. The pursuit of structure has become a phenomenological enterprise.

The reading of narrative is seen increasingly by the structuralist school to be an essentially active and collaborative process. Just as the narrator does not present the reader with an objective account of events, but construes them in the telling, in terms of her own understanding and experiences, so the reader does not merely respond obediently to what is on the printed page, but, directed by the narrator, makes independent use of her cultural knowledge and her experience of the genres of narrative. All the structuring frameworks and devices brought to our attention by Barthes and Genette imply collaborative readers.

However narrative texts differ in the demands they make on the reader. Barthes postulates two categories of narrative text - the

lisible or readerly and the scriptible or writerly (Barthes 1974). The readerly text, claims Barthes, offers us only limited interaction, since it operates in well established genres in ways that are highly predictable, providing the reader with no challenge in a text which is closed and thus denying the reader any possibility of construing herself or the world she inhabits, in a new way. The writerly text, on the other hand, offers the reader the delights of joint construction, and a reinterpretation of self and the world, inviting her to a shared awareness of that construction, not a view of a pre-ordained 'real' world. Barthes admits that no text can be completely writerly as it would become unreadable. But the contrast Barthes draws, although not absolute, is nonetheless real and implies highly significant differences in the structure of narratives.

Barthes does not elaborate on the dependence of these categories on the readers' experiences. A text that is readerly for one reader may be writerly for another, less acquainted with texts in that genre and less aware of the variability of genres and the mutability of narrative conventions. For many readers, texts that Barthes would class as writerly and therefore capable of promoting the keenest pleasures in reading, are likely to appear as impenetrable, unyielding, boring or disturbing to an intolerable degree. The avant garde is by definition not to the taste of the multitude, or indeed within its comprehension. By the same token, texts that Barthes would class as readerly may appear writerly to many less sophisticated readers.

Culler too recognises the importance of the reader's contribution. He sees the literary analyst's job as constructing not a taxonomy of texts, but a theory of the practice of reading. It should be

emphasised that such attention to the reading process does not imply the abandonment of earlier findings on patterns within the text. What it means is that these must be complemented by an understanding of the strategies the reader employs to make use of such patterns in the construction of meaning. Culler suggests, for example, that the reader's conception of genre offers a norm or set of expectations to guide her encounters with the text. These expectations amount to a theory of discourse which shapes the meanings the reader can make from a text. For Culler too, a work of literature is more than the printed text. It

.. has structure or meaning because it is read in a particular way, because these potential properties, latent in the object itself are actualised by the theory of discourse applied in the act of reading.

(Culler 1975 p.113)

3.5

The phenomenological view and related ideas on the reader's interaction with narrative text

Iser's focus has always been on the role of the reader rather than the structure of the text (Iser 1974, 1978). His historical examination of the novel from Bunyan to Beckett is an account of the changing responses implied in the reader. He sees the literary work as in part a function of the "individual disposition" of the reader which in turn is acted on by different patterns in the text.

The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence, and this convergence can never be precisely pinpointed, but must always remain virtual as it is not to be identified either with the reality of the text or with the individual disposition of the reader.

(Iser 1974 p.275)

The literary work exists between the poles of the printed text and the individual reader.

Wayne Booth takes a similar view, citing, like Iser, such antecedents as Sterne and Virginia Woolf. Booth develops James' notion that the active reader of a novel is, as it were, the product of the author as much as are the characters (Booth 1961). His conception of this relationship is very different from Barthes: reading for Booth involves an act of self-abnegation.

I must subordinate my heart and mind to the book if I am to enjoy it to the full the most successful reading is one in which the created selves, author and reader, can find complete agreement.

(Booth 1961 p.138)

But can any reader be the mere creature of the author as this suggests? Should novel reading preclude any engagement between the text and the reader's psychological insights, social attitudes and philosophical beliefs? Is it possible for a reader to drop all the values and beliefs with which her experiences are imbued when she enters the world of the novel? Surely the reader cannot simply set aside her own views and adopt the author's unquestioningly, as if she were replacing one lens with another.

Iser argues forcefully that

...the sacrifice of the real reader's own beliefs would mean the loss of the whole repertoire of historical norms and values, and this in turn would entail the loss of the tension which is a precondition for the processing and comprehension that follows it.

(Iser 1978 p. 37)

If some literary theorists have accorded the reader a lesser role than Iser and the later Barthes, others are more generous. Rader demonstrates that the active participation of the reader is necessary not only for the realization of writerly texts, but for any narrative fiction (Rader 1982). Imaginative fiction is never explicit, but demands a reader who brings to it an understanding of narrative conventions and a willingness to take on the task of imagining a

world. The more active the reader, the more the world comes alive and the greater the significance of the reading. Rader stresses the importance of inference, claiming that practiced readers know how to make inferences about what is going on in terms of such matters as temporal relations, motivation and causation.

While this is demonstrably valid, it is also clear that Rader's definition of active participation is rather less intellectually and emotionally demanding than Barthes'. The writer leaves the reader something to do, the reader operates inferentially to fill the gaps and make the necessary connections, but the net result may be a highly predictable narrative which in no way challenges the reader's understanding of the world.

Communication between the writer and reader of narrative fiction may be of a more or less demanding kind, but it is never straightforward transmission. The reader questions the text, predicts what might happen, infers missing information or reconstructs the chronological sequence of events. The relationship between writer and reader is conversational. This is no new observation. Sterne remarks in *Tristram Shandy*

Writing, when properly managed, (as you may be sure I think mine is) is but a different name for conversation.
(Sterne 1967 p.127)

The experience of reading a narrative is never totally assimilative. The reader does not just imbibe the text, soak it up or let it etch itself on her mind. However much these metaphors are used in everyday speech to characterise the reader's apparent surrender to the printed word, the reading of narrative fiction remains an active and interactive process. The narrative is constructed in this process, and thus it is not the extended monologue that appears on the printed

page, but a dialogue between this and the informed, enquiring and shape-giving reader.

3.6

Summary of findings on the structure of narrative

It is not possible to summarise findings on the structure of narrative in the same way in which I have summarised findings on the structure of conversation, reducing these to a neat tabular form organised in levels of linguistic description. This examination has been carried out exclusively at a semantic level and shows narrative in general and contemporary prose fiction in particular, to be structured by a range of powerful, complex and subtle means. If we accept the dualistic conception of story and narrative that lies at the heart of the structuralist view, then we can say that the patterning of the story as shown by both the story grammarians and the structuralists, clearly meets the criteria which Piaget sets down for the classification of an entity as a structure. The story forms a coherent whole which is self-regulating and capable of transformation. Much of the patterning of the narrative as explicated by Todorov, Barthes and Genette seems to lend support to the candidacy of the total narrative for classification as a structure as well. But narratives are harder to pin down for, unlike stories, they are not constant. As Todorov, Kristeva, Barthes and Herrnstein Smith have shown us, their patterning is also a function of wider social influence through the mechanisms of genre, intertextuality, the cultural code and the purposes and interests of narrator and reader in constructing and construing the narrative. These external shaping influences are themselves subject to change. As they change, so does

the narrative, despite the constancy of the text.

Nor are such structural changes only a matter of shifts in the larger cultural context. Very many of the structural features of the narrative have only a potential, not an actual existence: their realization demands the reader with her own set of experiences and understandings. The more varied these are in a given society, the more varied the narratives which different readers can construct from a given text.

Narratives are structures, even in the strict sense of Piaget's definition, but they are Protean structures: they always have shape and form, but the nature of their shape and form changes with the reader and the context of the reading.

4

Conclusion on the differences in discourse structure between conversation and contemporary prose fiction

Conversation, as we have seen, is not without form. It has beginnings and ends, openings and closings. In between these, utterances are tied to each other in exchanges by complex semantic and syntactic rules. Larger structures, less formally identifiable exist, not as clearly defined units organised sequentially, but as interlocking, overlapping or hierarchically organised topics. But such structural rules as there are within exchanges or larger conversational units, operate as guiding principles rather than untransgressable laws. Conversations lurch and shift with the mood, whim and current pre-occupations of the participants, each of whom (unless a marked status difference prevents it) is free to change direction, return to old topics or dwell on the topic of the moment.

The limitations are social conventions and the nature of the particular inter-personal relationship in which the conversation is embedded.

The reading of narrative is conversation of a very special kind, for one partner is in a considerably more privileged position than the other. While the reader is at liberty to select for realization those potential meanings which are of significance to her, the array of potential meanings is not limitless. Through the text the author exercises a large measure of control over the meanings the reader constructs. Thus the structure of narrative inheres partly in features of the text, both of story and of narrative proper so brilliantly delineated by the structuralist school. But, where the narrative is concerned, these aspects of structure have only a potential existence in the text, and await the reader who will infuse the chosen forms with content and significance from her own experience. The conversational interaction between writer and reader is of an asymmetrical kind. The reader is in conversation with the narrator about events and characters in a world that exists between them. The reader perceives some of these events through the prism of her experience and constructs others from her knowledge of the world and of other narratives. But the events and characters and the reader's attention are subject to the control of the narrator.

The reader cannot change the topic, omit central characters or insert others nor alter the nature of the characters' feelings as reported by the narrator. But in working within the confines of the narrator's agenda, through active participation or conversation with the narrator, the reader can achieve an experience which brings not only aesthetic satisfaction in the total narrative, but a sense of

order and coherence in a part of life itself. Barthes has shown us that the greater the creative effort called forth in the reader, the more profound is this satisfaction.

To articulate all the devices that operate at the level of structural configurations, to realize the semantic coherence explored above, would be an undertaking beyond the scope of this thesis. I would emphasise that if we agree that the narrative is the product of interaction between the writer and reader, then devices that realize the structuring of conversation, can also operate for narrative. But they operate rather differently. Although pitch, pause and stress (either overtly when a text is read aloud or covertly when it is read silently) may play a significant part in the reader's realization of a narrative text, the mode of written text denies, with few exceptions, the direct deployment of this structuring device to the narrator who must rely instead on syntactic and lexical means to communicate to the reader the appropriate intonational patterns that will structure the narrative. This fact, together with the greater density and complexity of narrative structure, means that such devices as the cohesive patterning documented by Halliday and Hasan and also the sentence adverbs noted by Stubbs must bear a much greater load in indicating the patterning of larger units than is the case in conversation.

I must not conclude this chapter without recognising that verbal narrative exists in oral as well as written form. In our highly literate society where members read narratives daily, both in the fictional forms of the novel and short story and in the 'factual' form of the newspaper story, narratives have not been banished from oral interaction. We live our daily lives through oral narratives in which

we constantly reshape and pattern our experiences and attitudes. As Labov and others have shown us, in some modern urban groups production of such oral narratives is highly organised and highly regarded (Labov and Waletzky 1966, Labov et al 1968, Labov 1972). But Tannen has noted that among highly educated sub-cultures in modern western society, not all appear to foster or value such oral narrative skills (Tannen 1982). Hymes warns that the expressivity of traditional narrative styles has for some time been regarded as an embarrassing reminder of their social origins by those moving upwards into the middle classes (Hymes 1979). There is no doubt a very strong case for the nurture of oral narrative, particularly in schools. However it is likely that even those of us who enter enthusiastically into the construction of oral narrative will, if we are fully initiated into this aspect of our literate culture, experience the most complex, challenging and highly structured verbal narratives in those that arise from the reading of printed narrative.

Relatively simple narratives abound in informal conversation. The act of reading the more sustained and complex narrative of the novel or short story means entering into a conversational relationship with the text. But despite these important connections between them, informal conversation and the novel constitute varieties which differ markedly from each other, not only in terms of the individual utterances of which they are composed but also in terms of the larger structures into which they cohere.

CHAPTER FIVE

Utterance to Text? The Five Year Old's Experience of Oral Language Compared with the Demands of the Encounter with Written Texts in the Early Stages of Learning to Read

1

Introduction

In Chapter 1 of this thesis I have argued that the child's familiarity with language plays a significant part in the process of learning to read, enabling the child from the earliest stages to generate hypotheses about the words printed on the page in front of her. In Chapter 2 I have argued that the well-known differential success in early reading between working class and middle-class children seems to be most closely correlated not with command of spoken language but with familiarity with books. In Chapters 3 and 4 I have argued that in the adult world there are very significant differences between the language of informal conversation and the language of the printed text, both at the rank of the individual utterance and also at the rank of larger units of discourse. Having established the nature of these differences in mature adult forms I now examine in this chapter whether a similar divide exists for young children learning to read in school.

In a paper written some fifteen years ago, Wilkinson writes, apparently enthused by the comparatively recent concept of reading and learning to read as linguistic processes, of listening and reading as parallel processes differing only in their physical realization.

The process is the same in that it is the same language
[the child] responds to when he listens as when he reads

with the difference of auditory for visual signs.
(Wilkinson 1969 p. 109)

Since that date, as awareness has developed of the differences between oral and written language in the adult world, there has been a corresponding growth in awareness of the gap between the child's oral language and that of even the most carefully written early reading text. In this Chapter I am concerned to document the extent and nature of that gap and its possible implications for early reading.

I make this attempt using the framework of systemic grammar and the approaches of discourse structure since as Chapters 3 and 4 have shown, these complementary paradigms offer the possibility of a full and principled examination of the differences and similarities between varieties and one that will have a degree of explanatory power.

As in Chapter 3 I make this examination of individual utterances at the levels of situation, semantics and structural configurations in turn, looking at both varieties at each level before moving on to the next level and subdividing the examination at each level into the dimensions of systemic description. I then proceed to an examination of the discourse structure of these varieties considering the shape and significance of whole interactions and texts rather than the nature of their component parts.

The lexis, syntax and semantic content of many series of reading primers, particularly those first published before 1970, have been heavily criticised in recent years (Clay 1972, Grundin 1980). Such series as The Ladybird Key Word Reading Scheme (Murray 1964) and Janet and John (O'Donnell and Munro 1954) have received frequent criticism for the artificiality and remoteness of their content and language. Crystal Fletcher and Garman emphasise the syntactic oddity of such sentences as "What have you in the Shop?" and "One kitten runs to the

basket" (Crystal Fletcher and Garman 1976). But in the last two decades other sets of primers have been produced with the stated aim of meeting such criticisms by presenting the child with texts that are less distant both in terms of experiential content and also of language. I will therefore examine texts of this sort, where the authors have made conscious efforts to make the language 'natural'. The texts I have chosen are One, Two, Three and Away (McCullough 1969), Link-Up (Reid and Low 1972) and Sparks (Hynds, Johns, Fisher and McKenzie 1972) and are subsequently identified as series A, B and C respectively. From these texts I have selected a total of eighteen, that is in each case a sample of the introductory books and first level texts that would probably be encountered in the first term or two of learning to read.

However comparison between the linguistic demands of these early reading texts and the oral language resources which five year olds bring to school is not a straightforward matter. It is surprisingly difficult to establish a full and clear characterisation of the oral linguistic experience typical of the English-speaking five year old, despite the very considerable scholarly attention that has been devoted to children's language development over the last two decades. Very much of this attention has been focussed on children's syntactic development and consideration of such matters as situation, semantics and discourse structure has been ^{largely} confined to the service they can occasionally perform in disambiguating the syntactic structure of an utterance. Many American investigators take this approach (Chomsky 1969, Bloom 1970 and Brown 1973). In this country the same tendency is shown by Crystal, Fletcher and Garman who have characterised the normal child's typical linguistic attainment at five years old solely

in terms of features which the systemic linguist would see as belonging to the level of structural configurations (Crystal, Fletcher and Garman¹⁹⁷⁶).₁₉₇₆

Not all investigators have relegated situation, semantics and discourse structure to the background. Wells and his co-workers at the University of Bristol Centre for the Study of Language and Communication have taken a wider view. But they have been less concerned to provide a general picture of young children's language use at any particular age than to establish invariant sequences of development, to note differences between the language of home and school and to contrast the language use of different individuals and groups of children. Only in passing ^{have} ~~have~~ they made references to any general characteristics of the language use of the 128 children studied (Wells 1981a and 1981c). Thus the descriptions that follow below include my own informal observations as well as substantiated accounts reported in the literature.

2

Comparison in terms of situation

Comparison at the level of situation is particularly difficult. While it is a relatively straightforward matter to examine these early reading texts in terms of the semantics and structural configurations of the sentences of which they are composed and to explore the structures into which these sentences cohere, to examine the situation of their use is rather more complex. The situation in which these texts are encountered in the classroom has not received much attention and the scope and focus of this study preclude detailed investigation in this area. So when characterising the situation of use of these

reading texts I draw on my own informal observations of reception classes in English Infant Schools over the last fifteen years.

2.1

Situational features of pre-school oral language

2.1.1

Physical

Typically pre-school children are physically close to their interlocutors without barrier to sound or vision. Often they are face to face.

2.1.2

Field

Where the writings of Wells and his co-workers do include general observations concerning the typical language use of the pre-school child, it is to mention features which have been shown in Chapter 3 to be markers of the extreme oral variety. Commenting on samples of language use in the home obtained one month before the children started their formal schooling, Wells and French (1980) observe

Talk at home typically arises out of immediate practical activity and is supported by the context in which it occurs.
(Wells and French 1980 p.57).

2.1.3

Tenor

The practical nature of the field of such language is matched by the informality of its tenor. Although as French and Woll (1981) note after examining the same data, young children have restricted conversational rights, yet they develop firm strategies for acquiring

access to conversation with the result that rather more of children's exchanges with adults in the home are initiated by the children than by their parents (Wells and French op.cit). Children at home also feel sufficiently close in status to their adult interlocutors to correct their mistakes (McLure and French 1981). That these largely child-initiated exchanges take place in an informal, firmly established and emotionally charged relationship is so undisputed as not to receive mention. These qualities surely characterise the relationship between most young children and their immediate families more closely than almost any other relationship. And it is with their immediate families that pre-school children gain most of their experience of oral language.

2.1.4

Mode

Dialogue, is of course the predominant mode of conversational interaction experienced by pre-school children. Wells and his co-workers have found monologue to be unusual and confined precisely to storytelling (Wells 1981). Furthermore each turn in the dialogue tends to be composed of only a very short number of morphemic elements, with 1.63 as the mean for the child addressing the parent, and 1.54 for the parents addressing the child. This is striking indeed. Whereas dialogue among adults may include a combination of short interjections with contributions that extend over many utterances, so that dialogues are studded with monologues, among young children and their parents dialogue appears to consist in the exchange of very brief utterances. As in a game of table tennis, each participant has to return the ball immediately to her partner.

2.2

Situational features of early reading texts

2.2.1

Physical

When five year olds engage in the typical British practice of reading a reading primer to their teachers, there is always a physical barrier between the absent author and the child reader. There may well also be a slight physical barrier between teacher and child. They are unlikely to be face to face and are more likely to be side by side so that both can have the same view of the text. The child is likely to be standing by the teacher who is sitting at her desk. Thus the physical quality of the situation is very different from most children's experience of conversational interaction.

2.2.2

Field

Primers such as those in series A, B and C, provide the material for what most teachers probably consider to be the real business of learning to read. All three series imply and invoke a situation between teacher, child and book which is exclusively concerned with language and pictures, a situation in which practical activity has no part. And the language stands in different relation to the pictures from the relation that obtains between oral language and the practical context in which it occurs. The language is not contributing to an activity which is framed by the pictures. As is typically the case in reading primers, the pictures are meagre, not so much in size as in detail and conception. They do not dominate the page or frame the

text as they so often do in picture books. In these early reading texts the pictures know their place: they are literal illustrations making perfunctory reference to people and events mentioned in the text. They are not representations to be dwelt on and explored in their own right, but serve only to provide colour to an otherwise drab page, and a degree of indexical prompting.

2.2.3

Tenor

An examination of the situation in which the young child 'reads' to her teacher speedily reveals a potential problem. One of the participants, the author of the text, is separated from the reader by time and space, even absent in name from the book's front cover and indeed has a very shadowy existence. The child whose experience of language has been predominantly oral, may well see the text as the teacher's creation or as an autonomous construct, and be quite unaware of the third participant.

Thus the tenor of this triangular relationship between these three participants one of whom may seem virtually non-existent for the child is very different from that of dialogue at home. The child is likely to have little sense of the author who nonetheless shapes the utterances of both child and teacher through the words on the page. And between teacher and child the relationship is one of unequal status since the child is expected to act on the teacher's instructions and submit to the teacher's judgement of success or failure in order to be initiated into this activity in which the teacher has expertise. As Romaine observes, the classroom is a place where the teacher creates order, largely through giving orders

(Romaine 1984). Reading is embedded in this 'orderly' relationship.

The class situation in which the teacher has to manage the activities of upwards of twenty five children whom she is unlikely to have known for any length of time, means that in general the relationship between teacher and pupil is likely to be more formal, less well established and less emotionally charged than the relationship between parent and child.

2.2.4

Mode

These texts are all monologues varying in length from 12 to 506 words, which the teacher may to a greater or lesser extent intersperse with comments and questions. But reading primers offer no equivalent of the child-initiated exchanges that have been shown to play such a large part in the pre-school child's experience of oral language. The child who has responded to the teacher's interjections is continually urged to press on in the business of word by word identification of the author's monologue. Reading a reading primer is less like a game of table tennis than a solo slog round an 18 hole golf-course on a pre-determined path, with the teacher as the professional golfer pointing out deficiencies in aim, posture and follow through, and the child denied any opportunity to decide her route.

2.3

Summary of situational differences

The situation in which children meet these early reading texts is one which is marked in physical terms by distance between participants, in field by independence of practical shared activity

and by explicitness for its own sake, in tenor by the uncertainty of the identity of the participants, (and, where teacher and child are concerned, by their status difference, the formality and short duration of their relationship and a lack of emotional involvement) and in mode by a monologic structure which denies the child any shaping influence on what follows. In all these respects it is in sharp contrast to the situation of parent/child and child/child interaction seemingly typical of the oral language experience of the pre-school years, apart, it should be emphasised, from those activities in which books have been involved. These differences are summarised in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1

Features of the situation of pre-school oral language at home and of encounters with early reading texts in school.

<u>Oral Language at five</u>		<u>Initial Reading Texts</u>
<u>Physical</u>	Physical proximity of participants without barrier to sound or vision.	Physical proximity of two participants without barrier to sound or vision; physical separation from third participant with barrier to sound and vision.
<u>Field</u>	Social activities involving joint practical action	Social activities concerned exclusively with pictures and explicit language.
<u>Tenor</u>	Informal, established and emotionally charged relationship.	Uncertainty of identity of participants; formal, unemotional relationship of short duration between teacher and child.
<u>Mode</u>	Dialogue	Monologue with encapsulated dialogue

3

Comparison in terms of semantics

3.1

Semantic features of utterances in pre-school oral language

3.1.1

Ideational

Here also there are similarities between the conversation of five

year olds and the extreme oral variety. Wells remarks of two children's experiences:

...as in most adult/pre-schooler conversation, interchanges in both homes are closely tied to context.
(Wells 1981c p.149)

This tie is one of semantic dependence. Elsewhere Wells notes that the achievement of comprehension always involves

a complex interaction of informational cues from a variety of sources.
(Wells 1981a p.66)

He argues that the preschooler's oral exchanges in the home are particularly problematic for the researcher attempting to assign them to semantic categories since many functions cannot be identified without drawing on non linguistic cues in the situational context, which must be taken to include the social features of the situation. This is no new observation. Luria notes that oral language originates in close connection with immediate experience and in the pre-school years relies on expressive and indexical gesture to the extent that it is usually intelligible only in the general setting of the conversation (Luria 1969).

3.1.2

Inter-personal

As in the extreme oral variety, there is strong emphasis in the child's pre-school oral language on interpersonal meanings. The semantic content of the messages communicated largely consists of interpersonal meanings which are communicated in part explicitly and in part by appeal to shared knowledge of meanings, experiences and attitudes and the hearer's inference of the speaker's intentions in the particular conversational situation.

3.1.3

Textual

Wells notes a high degree of cohesion between the utterances of child and parent as well as within the child's own utterances (Wells 1981a). He does not note the extent of references to the extra-linguistic context but cites Wootton's reference to "the essential indexicality and opaqueness of speech" (Wootton 1975 pp 61-2).

3.1.4

Further points

I have drawn on Wells' work in an attempt to construct a picture of semantic features common to the language experiences of pre-school children, whereas Wells and his co-workers are particularly concerned to identify the features which differentiate the language experiences of fast developing children from that of their slower age-mates. He notes that the parents of the former group endeavour to understand the child's intention and then help her find the form that matches that intention, fostering the child's ability to use the resources of syntax, lexis and intonation to communicate effectively in a range of situations where effectiveness is a matter of making what is said relevant to the needs of the listener as well as to the intentions of the speaker. This on occasion requires the child to make her meanings explicit. Thus the favoured child is encouraged to move away from the extreme oral variety by increasing independence from the extra-linguistic context. From his studies Wells claims that paradoxically in her attempts to help the child to be more explicit, the parent relies on her knowledge of this context in her tentative,

semantically extended rephrasings of the child's unclear utterances. For the child such an increase in explicitness is no simple matter since it involves both psychological distancing from experience and also the use of more complex forms of language. Wells' findings indicate that the children who are most successful in developing such explicitness are those whose parents seem to make the greatest efforts to construe their intentions, and to accept and develop their verbal initiations (Wells 1981b).

The exchanges of parents with slower developing children are characterised not by this quality of co-operative endeavour but instead by a lack of parental response to the child's unclear intentions, so that the child is not placed in a position in which she can learn to adjust the expression of her meanings to take account of the hearer's experience (Wells 1981c). Such differences are very relevant to the present argument, for the child who is helped towards greater explicitness is made more familiar with one aspect of the language of written texts.

3.2

Semantic features of the sentences in the early reading texts

3.2.1

Ideational

Because of the plentiful use of pictures, the sentences of the early primers studied cannot be said to be completely independent of their extra-linguistic context. However the written language stands in a different semantic relation to the picture from that of oral language to the situational context out of which it emerges and to

which it relates. The linguistic message of the primer does not depend on the picture for its elucidation: it restates what is regarded as significant in the picture and makes it linguistically explicit. 'The bus driver is in the bus' (B3 p9) is accompanied by a picture showing just that. Thus the semantics of the early primer are the reverse of those of synpraxic speech.

Another ideational peculiarity of the very earliest reading texts concerns their subject matter. The young child is being told things she already knows, for in all three series the objects depicted and named in the text are lamp-posts, buses and puddles. Because they are likely to have already been introduced by the teacher's oral story-reading and by wall displays, this is true even for C1 which consists of naming and locating the characters in the series. But of course what these texts are really about is not the labelling of familiar objects, but the child's initiation into the process of matching written words to spoken words and so a more appropriate parallel is with the child's early naming activities in oral language. What this implies for the semantics of these texts is more fully discussed under the heading of discourse structure in Section 5 of this chapter.

All three series include narratives in these early primers, the structure of which is examined in Section 5. In subject matter the narrative like the non-narrative sentences are concerned with mundane matters: Series A deals largely with the misbehaviour of dogs, Series B with the unremarkable events of a day at school and the trip home and Series C with the daily events of home, street and playground.

Although these texts are marked by their explicitness, they are certainly not marked by density of information. Each sentence seems

limited to one simple proposition such as 'Billy Blue-hat looked out of the window' (A3) 'the lorry driver is in the lorry' (B3) 'I was playing with my ball' (C5).

3.2.2

Inter-personal

Just as the situation of their use does not emphasise the relationship between author and child, so within the texts themselves there is no elaboration of this relationship. Unlike books written for children's pleasure, the texts include no dedication to a real child or children, no picture of the author or description that could form the basis for a conception of the author as a person

There is, in short, a formality about the relationships these texts imply. Sentences such as 'Michael falls off the swings and bumps his head' (C9) have nothing of the interpersonal intensity of "poor Michael's fallen off the swing and hurt his head really badly" that one would find in oral conversation. Ruddell notes that all reading texts, including language experience texts, are, in a three level system, at least one level of formality above children's oral language on school entry (Ruddell 1976). These texts certainly bear this out.

The interpersonal relationship most young readers are likely to be aware of is not the relationship between child and author, but the one between child and teacher. This relationship is not usually one of interpersonal mediation. The teacher does not typically see it as her chief role to bridge the gap between child and author. Her concern is with the child's performance. Durkin observes that such emphasis distorts the task of reading into a task of saying something to

another instead of getting something from another (Durkin 1981).

3.2.3

Textual

In these texts there is a paucity of cohesive ties with the result that utterances stand in jerky independence from each other. Four consecutive sentences of B4 read

Tommy met the policeman at the bus.
the bus was at the bus stop.
the policeman was reading the name on the bus.
the bus was going to Hill Street
(B4 pp 2-3).

The other two series have slightly more cohesion, at least in their narrative texts where consecutive sentences are tied together by reference as in

Billy Blue-hat looked out of the window.
He saw the little white dog.
(A3 3).

and

After tea the children watch television.
They see a picture all about jets.
(C7 pp 2-3).

The introductory books of Series A are alone in making indexical use of reference to tie the text to the accompanying picture.

Roger Red-hat. Here is Roger Red-hat.
(A1 p1).

But this paucity of cohesion together with the absence of indexical reference gives these books an odd textual quality. This is examined further under the heading of structural configurations in Section 4 and discourse structure in Section 5.

3.3

Summary of semantic differences

There is a sharp semantic contrast between pre-school children's experience of oral language and the reading primers they are presented with in school. In their oral language they are used to construing what is said in the light of shared experience and understanding, and in laying great emphasis on interpersonal meanings. They are used to utterances that are tied by cohesive devices to what has gone before and by indexical reference to the physical context in which they are talking. Most children have a conversational experience of utterances that are predominantly tied to context, but a few children have some experience of semantically independent utterances. However in early reading texts all sentences are semantically independent of context although accompanied by related pictures. The significance of this semantic independence is emphasised by Francis in her longitudinal study of 50 children between 5.9 and 7.3.

One important requirement for success in reading appeared to be the ability to understand the symbolic nature of speech - that it can be given significance out of a context of practical use.

(Francis 1971 p 212).

While the sentences in these texts in no way exhibit the informational density or strangeness of subject matter of the extreme written variety, they are also very far removed from the ideational content of conversation.

Their interpersonal and textual content is also different in that they place low emphasis on the interpersonal, establishing an unchanging formal distance, and share little of the connectedness of conversation or of its ties to the extralingual context. These differences are summarised in Table 5.2

Table 5.2

Features of the semantics of pre-school oral language at home and of the early reading texts examined

Oral language at Five	Initial Reading Texts
<u>Ideational</u>	
Dependence on agreed interpretation of situational context including its social features; low density of information; (higher degree of explicitness for some children).	Explicitness despite accompanying illustrations; low density of information.
<u>Inter-personal</u>	
Emphasis on interpersonal meanings; appeal to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) hearer's knowledge of speaker's experience, meanings and attitudes, b) hearer's inference of speaker's intentions. 	No emphasis on reader's relationship to writer; (some emphasis on encapsulated inter-personal meanings); distortion of reader's relationship to text to one of performance not construction of meaning.
<u>Textual</u>	
Presence of cohesion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) tying different parts of utterance together, b) tying successive utterances of different speakers together; presence of indexical references tying utterances to extra-linguistic situation.	Rarity of cohesion; some use of reference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) to tie elements of text together, b) to tie text to picture.

Comparison in terms of structural configurations

4.1

The structural configurations of pre-school oral language

The work of Crystal, Fletcher and Garman (1976) provides much illumination at this level. They note that by the time the child is four and a half years old, her spontaneous speech displays fluency and grammatical accuracy.

But a large range of grammatical processes remain to be implemented which have been little researched.

(Crystal, Fletcher and Garman op. cit. p.81)

Not working within the systemic school, they do not use Halliday's categories of transitivity, mood and theme, but their observations can be fitted into this framework, although they neglect features of mood. Their findings are supplemented by those of others who have looked at particular aspects of children's oral language development.

4.1.1

Transitivity

It is now generally agreed that the oral language of the five year old has a lesser degree of syntactic complexity and a narrower lexical range than that of the ten year old. However, the syntactic achievements of most five year olds should not be belittled. Crystal notes that by this age most children can produce embedding and co-ordinating structures as well as a variety of tenses and control of aspect (Crystal 1976). But there is much still to be learnt.

Crystal Fletcher and Garman (op.cit.) note that at five most

children still have incomplete mastery of irregular verbs and nouns and of the sequence of tenses and other subordinate/main clause relations. Karmiloff-Smith (1979) notes that any linguistic structure which violates the canonical order (either by removing the agent of an action from the subject slot or by creating a contrast between the sentence order and the temporal order of events) is likely to be acquired after the age of five. Limitations of production are accompanied by limitations of reception. Sheldon (1974) reports that children of five and under interpret all relative clauses as parallel structures, failing to distinguish between 'the boy that hit John hit me' and 'the boy that John hit, hit me'. Carol Chomsky (1969) reports experimental findings concerning the misinterpretation by children aged from 5 to 10, of utterances with a deceptively simple appearance hiding an abnormal syntactic structure.

The study of lexical development is not such a popular enterprise as the study of syntactic development and has been distinctly unfashionable in recent years. As far as production goes, it is difficult to elicit a full lexical range from children and difficult also to determine the denotation of the words they do produce. Tests of reception imply situations of experimenter control which violate the norms of children's expectations of conversational autonomy. So any information on lexical development needs to be treated with caution. Nevertheless lexis cannot be disregarded: we need some indication of the extent to which five year olds are familiar with the lexis of early reading texts if we are to characterise adequately the differences between their experience of oral language and the demands of early reading texts. I therefore examine the following lexical studies in some detail.

Cruttenden estimates the average productive vocabulary of five year old children to be upwards of 2000 words (Cruttenden 1979). A study by Quigley explicitly addresses the problem of difference between the child's receptive vocabulary and the words encountered in early reading books (Quigley 1973). She claims to have shown that many early reading texts include words which children leaving nursery school appear not to understand. From an examination of the vocabulary of 35 children through a variation of The English Picture Vocabulary Test she concludes that if children are to make active use of their linguistic knowledge as they learn to read, such discrepancies as her test reveals should not be overlooked.

Quigley's study is confined to the 73 words that she found constituted the first 50 words in all the six reading schemes examined. There is no overlap between her six series and my three and so the relevance of the findings for this study is limited.

There are other grounds for reservation also. Quigley admits that her sample of 35 children is skewed towards the lower end of the social class spectrum. But even so it is very surprising to note that at least 10% of her 5 year olds appeared not to have understood the word 'in' and at least 25% seem to have found problems with 'see'. Perhaps her test confused the child subjects.

A more comprehensive and reliable light can perhaps be thrown by the Mount Gravatt study (Hart, Walker and Gray 1977). This study is concerned with production rather than reception, so might be expected to include only a sub-set of the words the subjects 'understand'. Yet words found problematic by Quigley's five year olds were used freely and frequently by the Mount Gravatt children.

The project was set up to provide the writers of Australian

reading primers with knowledge of the language children are actively familiar with. One of the means of achieving this goal was the compilation of a list of the 1123 single words used by children in five age groups ranging from two and a half to six and a half years. As suggested above, the data collection was conducted more naturalistically than in Quigley's study. The speech of the 93 children involved was recorded throughout a typical day (involving attendance at school for the older children) by means of a radio microphone. It appears that much of the children's time was spent in outdoor play and there is no reference to story reading. All of these children used 'in', and all except one of the two and a half year olds used 'see', so this study provides, perhaps a more reliable indication of children's vocabularies. But yet the dominance of outdoor play and the inclusion of younger children mean that this list gives less than a full account of the words the five year old child is capable of producing, let alone all those she can understand in some sense.

It could also be argued that any differences between this list and the texts might be attributable to cultural differences resulting from wide geographical separation, rather than an indication of the differences between the language of conversation and the language of primers. As I have already stated, vocabulary development has not received much attention in recent years and so more culturally comparable information is hard to come by.

The only relevant British study is over 25 years old. (Burroughs 1957). Because of the unavailability of suitable recording equipment, the data collection for this study was undertaken in a far less naturalistic manner than for the Mount Gravatt study. 330 rural and urban children were studied in the English Midlands, evenly divided

into four age groups of around 5, 5½, 6 and 6½. The 3504 different words they used were noted down by an observer as they conversed with a student teacher about a variety of pictures over ten 10 minute periods. 1495 of the words produced were spoken by four children or fewer. The remaining 2009 words are divided according to frequency of use into four groups of roughly 500 each. The first '500' contains those used most frequently and the fourth those used least frequently.

The children were talking with unfamiliar adults throughout the period of observation and about pictures in front of them rather than conversing as an accompaniment to any of the other varied activities they would normally have engaged in. These constraints on the situation might be expected to have shifted the children's language towards a written variety.

The word 'once' used infrequently and only by the older of the Mount Gravatt children, is among the first '500' in the Burroughs study. The word 'upon', quite absent from the Mount Gravatt study, is in the Burroughs third '500'. This suggests that perhaps some at least of the Burroughs children were responding to this very limiting and rather unusual situation by treating it as an occasion for story making. So any contrasts that emerge between the 3504 words used by the 330 children, recorded over 100 minutes each, and the words used in the reading primers, should be taken seriously.

The comparatively narrow lexical and syntactic range are points of similarity between the language of five year olds and the extreme oral variety. But uncertainties about irregular verbs and nouns, about tense sequences and other clause relations and about certain superficially simple sentence structures, constitute significant points of difference. However an awareness of what the five year old

has to learn should not cloud an appreciation of what she has already mastered. Five year olds tend to be fluent and confident users of a variety of sentence structures even though some are still beyond them. And as far as we know their vocabularies include thousands of words.

4.1.2

Mood

The five year old's management of features of mood appears not to have received much systematic attention. However Brown notes that modalities of the simple sentence including imperatives and some interrogatives are learnt in the third of his five stages of early language acquisition, preceding subordination and co-ordination and so should be well under control by five years (Brown 1973). Informal observation suggests that five year olds spend much of their time using imperatives and interrogatives.

As Ruddell observes their speech is also likely to contain a high proportion of such indicators of informality as the contractions "hafta", "gonna" and "wanna" as well as "I'll" and "she'll" (Ruddell 1976). Informal observation suggests that children and adults in conversation together make considerable use of phatic vocabulary and of words peculiar in form and meaning to the immediate family group. Another unstudied area is the extensive use young children appear to make of intonation to create role relationships. Young children's attempts to plead, command and contradict appear to be heavily dependent on the manipulation of intonation.

4.1.3

Theme

The inter-connectedness of the conversation of pre-school children has already been noted. This is examined in more detail under discourse structure in Section 5.1.2 of this chapter, as are the cohesive devices that realize this interconnectedness. For this reason I confine this Section to an examination of extra linguistic reference and the relation between rheme and theme, or functional sentence perspective.

Children in this age group, as Karmiloff Smith notes, are in the process of moving from a total reliance on exophoric reference to the inclusion of endophoric reference (Karmiloff Smith 1979). When the conversation of five year olds and even slightly older children is taped and transcribed it becomes difficult to identify the referents (Scinto 1977, Perera 1984).

Intonation is the major means by which most five year olds manage the relations between different parts of the sentence, as Schallert, Kleiman and Rubin (1977) have noted. But their control of the system is still limited as Cruttenden (1974) observes. As to other means for managing rheme and theme, most five year olds have yet to learn how to vary word order to control the distribution of emphasis as in such phrases as 'hardly had I gone', or how to use clause sequences introduced by 'it' or 'there' as in 'it was John who said he couldn't come'. The use of the full passive, that is including an expressed agent, is very rare indeed in this age group (O'Donnell et al 1967, Perera 1984). Their comprehension of this form appears to be similarly limited (Slobin 1966 Baldie 1976). Thus in terms of intra-sentential thematic structure, the oral language of pre-school

children differs from the extreme oral variety in relying solely on a rather simple use of intonation to create functional sentence perspective.

Although they have much still to learn, most five year olds have an extensive range of syntactic structures at their command and a large and rapidly growing vocabulary. They appear to be familiar with a range of modal features and adept at making use of these. Perhaps their most significant limitation at sentence level is their reliance on exophoric reference and restricted control of thematic structure. This is not to say that their language is ineffective in context: exophoric reference is clearly effective in conversation and their use of intonation to realise thematic structure appears to meet their oral needs. But unlike the features of transitivity and mood, these features of theme are tools that are limited in range and become useless when familiar sentence patterns are committed to writing. Utterances with clear reference, shape and significance in conversation become confusing, flat and empty sentences when written down.

4.2.

The structural configurations of the sentences in these early reading texts

It is at the level of structural configurations that most attention has been drawn to the differences between the language of primers and the oral language of young children. The authors of all three series stress, in their accompanying handbooks, the importance of using only the language that is familiar to the child. The authors of Series C do not specify what they mean by this, but McCullough, the

author of Series A, construes this in terms of lexis only whereas the authors of Series B, Reid and Low, show in their Teachers Manual that they have given close attention to the syntax used, basing their choices on the findings of English and American research into the syntax of five and six year olds and omitting the structures peculiar to written language (McCullough 1981, Reid and Low 1977, Strickland 1962, Loban 1963, O'Donnell, Griffin and Norris 1967). Reid and Low concede that to make the language of early reading texts identical to speech is impossible.

The earliest books do not attempt to reproduce oral language exactly because no written language is exactly like speech.
(Reid and Low 1977 p.18)

The examination of the texts of all three series reveals significant differences in transitivity, mood and theme.

4.2.1

Transitivity

The syntactic patterns employed in all three series are somewhat similar. Apart from the picture labelling of the introductory texts, all use complete major sentences, consisting mainly of the structures identified by the research cited by Reid and Low (op.cit) as the very simplest structures used by children in this age group. These sentences are of the form SPC and SPA. Series A and C vary this somewhat. Series A makes frequent use of a succession of parallel sentences culminating in a final sentence of the form SPC + C + C + C or SPA + A + A + A + A, with C and A represented by extended phrases rather than single words. Series A includes one example of co-ordination and Series B includes ^{nine} 9 examples, all in B4. All take the form of SPC or SPA clauses connected by 'and'. Series C includes

some complex sentences such as

They see a big jet go up in the sky

(C7 p.3)

This is, of course, also an SPC structure, but C consists of a non-finite clause incorporating an extended adverbial phrase. Such complexity seems well within the language competence of most five year olds even as characterised by Reid and Low's sources. But only Series C includes such subordination, and then only four instances of which the one cited above is the most complicated. Elsewhere the transitivity of the texts examined differs sharply from oral usage at this age precisely in its consistently well-formed simplicity: complete major sentences of the type specified above are only a small subset of the variety of sentence types which Strickland, Loban and Crystal have found are produced by children of this age.

The parallelism noted in series A, present also to a lesser extent in some texts of Series B and C, is a clearly literary characteristic that again separates these texts from what is known of oral language at this age. Certainly the initial reader is not presented with later developing features of transitivity such as violations in canonical order, confusing relative clauses or sentences with deceptive structures.

However this does not mean that, parallelism apart, these sentence structures are always unproblematic for beginning readers. Five year old children are likely to be very familiar with structures of the type most used in early primers but, as Schallert, Kleiman and Rubin suggest, they may fail to recognise them when the boundaries of their constituent elements are no longer clearly indicated through intonational means (Schallert, Kleiman and Rubin 1977). Durkin

identifies such failure as both a frequent problem of beginning readers and also a common characteristic of poor comprehenders (Durkin 1981).

In the texts examined the nominal groups tend to be simple, consisting mainly of $d + N$ or $d + Aj + N$. The exception is Series A which includes nominal groups with the structures $d + Aj + Aj + N$ and $d + N + p (+d) (+e) + N$, all well within the oral competence of children of this age. Series A is alone in including some post-modification of nominal groups. The very first introductory book includes the words

...in the white house
with the red roof
and the red door
in the Village With Three Corners.
(A1 p.8.)

Here one post modified nominal group is embedded within another. The other five examples in this series are shorter and simpler.

The verbal groups in all the series are simple, with little use made of auxiliaries. There is some variation between the series in terms of tenses. Series A starts with the timeless, simple present, but quickly moves into the simple past when narrative is introduced. Series B also uses the simple present in the earlier texts, but together with what Halliday terms the present in present and then, as it moves into narrative, adds the simple past and the present in past (Kress 1976).

As to lexis, although nearly all the verbs are irregular, they are all likely to be familiar to British five year olds. All appear in the first or second '500' (Burroughs op. cit.). All the other words, except for proper names, appear on the Burroughs listing although 'postcard' and 'dictionary' in Series B and 'parachute' and 'pilot' in

Series C were used by four children or fewer, and 'zip' in Series C is in the fourth '500'. One word in Series A, two in Series B and seven in Series C appear on the third '500'. All the other words in these reading books are among the 1000 words found by Burroughs to be used most commonly by his subjects. Thus Quigley's conclusions are not borne out by this examination.

Since the Mount Gravatt list is less than a third as long as the Burroughs list, and unlike it, includes both proper names and words sharing a single stem, it is not surprising that many of the words in these texts are absent from it. They number 29 in all - three from Series A, 11 from Series B and 15 from Series C. Some of these such as 'village' (A), 'milkman' and 'lorry' (B), and 'vinegar' (C) may be absent for cultural reasons. A further ten words including one in Series A, three in Series B and six in Series C were used by no children under six and a half in the Mount Gravatt study.

In terms of transitivity the individual sentences of these texts can hardly be termed strange to the five year old. But in their unvarying well-formedness they may have a daunting quality.

4.2.2

Mood

Only one book, C4, where the word 'can't' appears twice, makes any use of contracted forms. Apart from this single instance, all the texts are noticeable for their uncontracted forms, such as 'here is', 'I am', 'it is' and 'he is', a formality reinforced by the previously mentioned restriction to complete major sentences. Little use is made of phatic vocabulary, even when the characters are talking to each other. In B4 Karen tells someone (her mother? the reader?) of the

events of her day, but with none of the expressive colouring that is so dominant in such accounts by young children.

Karen said:

I went to the paper shop today
and I got a comic.
I went home in the bus with Tommy.
I was reading my comic on the bus.
(B4 p.25)

All the texts are unrelievedly declarative: there are no interrogatives and no imperatives, whether softened or otherwise. Indeed the reader is not explicitly addressed at all. Such absence of direct address is, of course, a feature of much text written for adults.

As to direct speech between characters, all three series contain some but of a rather unusual kind. In Series B it is always preceded by 'he/she said', but it is not clear to whom it is addressed as this is not stated or even clearly implied by the context or the content of the speech, which moves abruptly through the events of the day. In Series C, direct speech is used to introduce the reader to the characters, but with no clear indication of who is speaking. Other early texts in this Series are told entirely in an anonymous first person, creating an ambiguous mood and perhaps further puzzles for the child who wants to know who are the participants in this discourse. In Series A the use of direct speech is not so much unusual as literary (and therefore unfamiliar to those unfamiliar with books) since it is followed rather than preceded by attribution to the speaker.

She looked in.
"Go away," said the little old man.
"Go away!" said the little old woman.
(A5 p.7)

None of the texts makes any use of the conditional, the subjunctive,

modal auxiliaries or modal adverbial phrases.

4.2.3

Theme

Apart from the phrase "here is" used to refer to the pictures in A1 and A2, these texts contain none of the exophoric reference that abounds in the conversation of five year olds. As to endophoric reference and other cohesive devices, their deployment is examined in Section 5.2.2 of this Chapter.

There is no use of word order or of the passive to create functional sentence perspective, for, as already observed, all the texts avoid any violation of canonical word order. Since there is also a total absence of finite clause subordination and also of co-ordination other than by the use of 'and', FSP is not achieved by these means either. Despite these serious limitations, Series A displays some indication of FSP in its use of parallel structures, in which the new element slotted into the familiar pattern provides a marked distinction between rheme and theme.

Billy ran into Roger.
Jennifer ran into Billy.
The little white dog
ran away with the ball.
(A3 pp. 7-8)

All the sentences of the other two series have an unrelieved flatness and absence of focus.

4.3

Summary of differences in terms of structural configurations

In their structural configurations as well as their semantics, these texts are rather different from the conversational experience of

British five year olds. Where transitivity is concerned the authors have certainly chosen forms familiar to young children through conversation (with the possible exception of the post-modification in Series A) but they have restricted themselves to a small subset of these and in so doing made the language strange. Even in the dialogue there are none of the unfinished or minor sentences of conversation. Co-ordination and subordination are virtually absent. A similar narrow uniformity pervades the mood of these texts, marked by formality and anonymity. As to theme, they are marked by a paucity of cohesive ties, an absence of exophoric reference and a lack of functional sentence perspective.

These features set these texts apart from informal conversation. By the same token and leaving aside the formality and anonymity of mood, they also set these texts apart from the language of other books as well as the extreme written variety.

Series A is, however rather different from the other two. It has a wider range of sentence structures including some quite complicated post-modified nominal groups. It makes use of direct speech which is followed, not preceded by such formulations as 'he said'. There is more even use of reference, and parallel structures are used to create FSP. All these features move it towards the language of books and therefore in the direction of the extreme written variety. They are all features which children unused to hearing stories read aloud are likely to find strange.

Meanwhile series B and C exist in a kind of linguistic limbo. The features of mood ally them with the extreme written variety, but the features of transitivity and theme cut them off from this. The child meeting these texts is encountering language forms very different from

those of conversation.

Table 5.3

Features of the structural configurations of pre-school oral language at home and of the early reading texts examined

<u>Transitivity</u>	<u>Oral Language at Five</u>	<u>Initial Reading Texts</u>
	Range of complete and incomplete major and minor sentences; limited structural complexity; incomplete mastery of irregular verbs and nouns, sequence of tenses and other subordinate/main clause relations; relatively narrow lexical range.	Restriction to a very limited range of complete major sentences with very limited structural complexity; parallelism in some texts; simple nominal and verbal groups with limited post-modification; narrow range of tenses; very narrow lexical range.
<u>Mood</u>	High incidence of phatic lexis, lexis peculiar in form and meaning to child's own idiolect; contracted forms; high incidence of interrogatives and imperatives as well as declaratives; use of intonation to create role relationships.	Little use of phatic lexis; restriction to lexis of SBE; almost total absence of contracted forms; absence of interrogatives and imperatives; absence of intonational information; direct speech; confusion in some texts concerning who is speaking and who is being addressed, in other texts established through 'literary' convention; no use of conditional, subjunctive, modal auxiliaries or modal adverbial phrases.
<u>Theme</u>	Preponderance of extralinguistic over intralinguistic reference; use of cohesive ties to create connections with non-linguistic context	Absence of extra-linguistic reference; scant use of cohesive ties apart from lexical cohesion where repetition predominates.

5.0

Comparison in terms of discourse structure

5.1

The discourse structure of pre-school oral language

As I have indicated in chapter 4, the discourse structure of informal conversation is a comparatively new field of investigation. Despite the pioneering work of Wells and Montgomery, knowledge of the discourse structure of conversations with five year old children is as yet patchy (Wells and Montgomery 1981). What we do know indicates that it is not very different from that of the adult variety of informal conversation in terms of the particulars outlined in Chapter 4.

5.1.1

The semantic structure of the exchange and larger conversational units

5.1.1.1

Ideational

The ways in which propositions are spread over exchanges do not appear to have been studied explicitly in work on conversations with young children. But the ideational interdependence of different utterances within the exchange has been noted by Wells and Montgomery (op.cit.) as a pervasive feature of conversation with young children. Informal experience suggests that topic shift is more commonplace with young children than with adults and that their conversations are marked by sudden switches with no apparent ideational connection.

5.1.1.2

Interpersonal

The reciprocity of the roles taken by speakers within an exchange and the consequent interpersonal interdependence has been noted by Wells and Montgomery (op.cit.) as a pervasive feature of conversation with young children, one that plays a significant part in binding successive utterances into coherent units of a higher rank. Shields' study of nursery school children bears this out and shows that young children are relatively skilled conversationalists in that when talking with adults or with other young children they adjust to the interpersonal situation and achieve coherence in conversation through the patterning of speech acts over many exchanges (Shields 1980). Willes' work with children in a British reception class shows that the peculiar oral discourse demands of the classroom are learnt quickly and more easily than might be expected (Willes 1981).

This interpersonal coherence is a complex matter. Shields shows that it is dependent on a complex intellectual and social sub-structure involving, among other things, the co-ordination and negotiation of intentions. Much of this appears to be achieved through non-verbal means as young children construe such matters as stance, proximity and line of gaze, not only to assign referential meaning to utterances but also to determine the status of utterances as speech acts and therefore the kind of response that is appropriate. Reeder has shown that children as young as three appear to make extensive and reliable use of these sources of information to discriminate between requests and offers (Reeder 1981). Examining parent-child interactions, French and Woll conclude that children of pre-school age show knowledge of sequencing rules dependent on such

speech act recognition, and an ability to bring such knowledge to bear on the needs of the situation (French and Woll 1981).

The relation of participants to each other in terms of their respective status as knowers has not been explicitly studied. But Wells' studies of parent-child conversation indicate that children initiate a significantly higher proportion of exchanges than parents (Wells 1981a). French and Woll show that this is partly a result of children's ingenious manipulation of what are restricted conversational rights (French and Woll op.cit.). Typically four and five year olds do not use the opening slot in an exchange to present a complete, explicit proposition, but choose instead to present either part of a proposition or an utterance such as 'You know what?' intended and construed as a prompt to an invitation to present a complete proposition. The use of such a device can be seen as the child's assertion of her status as knower in the face of the parent's reluctance to accord her such a status.

Wells' studies and the others cited above provide the necessary support for his view that by the time children reach the age of formal schooling, they have achieved an awareness of the nature of conversational discourse and are both constrained by its limitations and able to exploit its resources. The semantics of five year olds' informal conversations differs significantly from that of adults, probably only with respect to topic, in that topical coherence is probably weaker, and topical range probably more limited.

Walkerdine has noted another phenomenon which she terms the discursive format (Walkerdine 1982). A format, in Walkerdine's view, is constituted by the adoption of particular conceptions of subject matter and characteristic social roles. From data collected in an

East London nursery class Walkerdine observes that pre-school children are capable of rapid and skilful switching between formats, producing utterances that cohere with what has gone before in terms of both consistency of conception of subject matter, and social roles. One moment it is the discursive format of nurse and patient, the next mother and child.

Although they have learnt the formats through their participation in everyday practices, young children are by no means restricted to the role of child, but can take up positions they have never taken in real life. At some point every infant teacher has heard her own voice or that of a mother coming from the Wendy House.

Walkerdine shows that very young children include in their conversational repertoire the capacity to invoke and construct familiar situations by means of a succession of interchanges which can be sharply characterised at a semantic level and also in terms of the phrasing, lexis and even the intonation patterns employed. The initial move into the discursive format Walkerdine terms the 'opening metaphor' as the child produces an utterance such as "Hello Diane, let's watch telly" creating a role for herself and implying a role for the child addressed and a situational context. Continuation of the format can be seen as development of the opening metaphor. What should be stressed here is that the shaping force of the discursive format is metaphoric, not metonymic.

This brief account of the semantic structuring of young children's conversation indicates that it is far from shapeless. Young children may flit from topic to topic, but they do not move at random and they are not manipulated by the adults they converse with. Where they move into a discursive format this inter-personal

structuring is tightened further into a metaphoric coherence that frames the way in which contributions are constructed and construed. The ideational looseness of young children's conversation is coupled with a keen awareness of inter-personal control. This provides its principal source of conversational coherence.

5.1.2

The devices used to realize conversational structures

As the preceding section has shown, recent work on young children's language has started to yield as yet patchy information on its discourse structure at the semantic level. Information on the devices used to realize this structure is similarly recent and patchy. Hence I have again supplemented formal findings with informal observations. Formal evidence is focussed on four of the five cohesive devices examined by Halliday and Hasan (1976) and concerns their occurrence in children's speech rather than their use in conversations with children. Thus we can learn something of the devices children use to realize the ideational dimension of their conversational coherence. But in assessing this evidence we should remember that the incidence and distribution of such cohesive devices tells us nothing about the far more significant interpersonal structuring, whose realization is as yet unexplored.

Endophoric reference is not mastered by most five year olds. Karmiloff Smith (op.cit.) notes that

A ... characteristic of language development after five appears to be the gradual passage from extralinguistic to intralinguistic reference.

(Karmiloff Smith 1979 p.323).

Rubin (1978) reports that in conversation with young children intonational stress on pronouns often disambiguates their referents,

thereby easing the transition from extralinguistic to intralinguistic reference. Garber reports that her six year old subjects employed both reference and (to a much lesser degree) substitution (Garber 1979). But Scinto's study of the speech of children aged 7-15 reveals a frequent lack of clarity about the identity of the referents in the speech of the seven year olds (Scinto 1977).

Crystal Fletcher and Garman note that the more complex patterns of ellipsis and substitution as exemplified in such sentences as 'the other also took one' are beyond the productive competence of most children under nine or so. In her analysis of transcripts made by Fawcett and Perkins of six year olds conversing with one another, Perera shows that although they can use ellipsis as a cohesive device, there is a tendency to give full responses where the accepted adult form would be elliptical (Fawcett and Perkins 1980, Perera 1984). This tendency is progressively reduced as the age of the subjects increases.

As to connectives, Crystal, Fletcher and Garman (op.cit.) report that the five year old has much to learn. From their findings they conclude that 'since', 'unless' and 'although' continue to be confused with 'and' by most children until the age of nine or so, and that the more complex connectors such as 'however', 'actually' and 'frankly' are also beyond them until this age.

But Garber reports quite extensive use of connectives to link sentences into coherent discourse (Garber 1979). Perera's analysis of Fawcett and Perkins transcripts shows these connectives to be of all four types examined by Halliday and Hasan (op.cit.), namely additives such as 'and' and 'as well', adversatives such as 'though' and 'anyway', temporal connectives such as 'then' and 'first of all' and

causal connectives such as 'so' and 'else' where this means 'if not'. Neither Garber nor Perera reports on confusion of the type noted by Crystal, Fletcher and Garman.

It seems that as yet young children's use of many formal devices to realize the ideational coherence of their conversation remains unexplored. There appears to be no evidence on children's use of lexical cohesion and indeed this would appear to be difficult to disentangle from topical consistency. Children's use of intonation as an indication of discourse structure appears to be as yet similarly unstudied. However informal evidence suggests that intonation is used by even very young children as indication of the structure of small stretches of discourse, signalling the relative importance of propositions within the units, and the status of utterances as speech acts. The joint production of utterances seems also neglected but Wells and Montgomery (op.cit.) note the prominence of incorporation in conversations with young children and the significant part it plays in creating conversational coherence. Nor does it seem that the use of sentence adverbs or particles has been studied. Informal evidence suggests that sentence adverbs are not a prominent feature whereas particles such as 'right' and 'O.K.' pepper conversations with young children.

Children's increasing use of all these cohesive devices reflects a growing independence from the physical and psychological aspects of the situation they share with their conversational partners. The construction of coherence is dependent on the notion of context being enlarged to include the discourse itself. As Lyons notes, reference develops out of deixis and necessitates a shift from concern with spatial dimensions to concern with the temporal dimensions of the

context of utterance (Lyons 1975). The appropriate use of sentence adverbs implies an even greater awareness of the existence of discourse and of the logical relations between clusters of propositions.

The conversations in which five year old children participate may not be as ideationally coherent as those conducted by skilled adults, but the utterances of participants appear to be bound together by many ties at the semantic level, realized by a growing variety of devices at the level of structural configurations. Conversations with five year olds may not be neat, tight or apparently orderly, but manipulation of apparently disorganised data by altering the order of utterances, removing the cohesive devices or erasing the intonational patterning, results in a fragmentation which reveals the relative ideational coherence of the original.

5.2

The discourse structure of early reading texts

At the rank of discourse structure the early reading texts under examination seem as distant from the conversational experience of young children as they are the rank of the individual utterance. But most of the differences in discourse structure between these texts and conversation do not represent shifts towards mature adult written discourse. Although the inter-personal is more of a binding force than the ideational, the structure of five year olds' conversation is not fundamentally different from the structure of their parents' conversation but on the evidence of these texts reading books are very different from novels.

Even if we follow Prince in his minimal definition of the

narrative as a representation in a time sequence of at least two connected events neither of which entails the other, most of the texts under examination do not qualify as narratives (Prince 1982). Of the 18 selected texts only two in Series A, one in Series B and three in Series C meet the criterion. The remaining texts are of two sorts - labelling and statements of stasis.

All three series begin with introductory texts solely composed of labels accompanying pictures, each page being devoted to one person, object or class. Five texts in all are of this sort.

The items labelled in each text all belong to one clear category such as large exotic animals, and the juxtaposition of instances implies no narrative. It is as if the author were attempting to re-engage the novice reader in that early phase of language development that is largely concerned with naming, when the child involves herself in finding the names of all the objects around her, not as a pragmatic means to an end, but as a mathetic end in itself, which serves in part to celebrate a shared field of attention with the participating adult. Rag books, given typically to infants between^e 6 and 18 months, successfully invite adult and child to extend this activity to pictorial representations of objects. But the introductory reading texts examined here differ from these in two important respects. First there is the poverty of their illustrations. Secondly all the initiative has been removed from the child: there is no effective dialogue, only the repetition of the author's fragmented monologue.

Six texts consist of collections of statements concerning stasis rather than action. A4 is a succession of such statements about an old woman and her animal possessions. In C2 the statements concern the narrator's attitudes to a variety of puddles and in C3 the

narrator's attitude to fish and chips. In C4 the statements concern a problem situation where a child finds herself alone with a jammed zip. C6 and C8 both consist of a succession of declarations of stasis followed by a statement of one action.

Unlike the labelling group, this statement of stasis group is not sharply distinct from the narrative group since some of the texts imply possible narratives, particularly when the words are construed in conjunction with the pictures. In A4, for example, the accumulated image of the little old woman and her animals might be the beginning or end of a story. In C3 the statements of attitude follow and imply the sequence of eating fish and chips, which is actually illustrated in the pictures. In C4 the problem presented implies a solution which if recounted would convert it to a narrative. However in B3, a hybrid between the labelling group and the statement of stasis group, there is no such suggestion. The statements all concern the spatial relations between the people and objects labelled in the earlier part of the text. Their nature and juxtaposition defy any attempt to construct a narrative.

The stories of the six explicit narratives vary. In Series A, both 3 and 5 contain stories which, for all their brevity fit Beaugrande and Colby's protagonist/antagonist rule set (Beaugrande and Colby 1979). C5 also has an antagonist who creates a problem state for the protagonist, but this is not developed into any trial between the two, as the protagonist makes no attempt to get back the ball that has been snatched from him. C7 and C9 contain stories in that they present central characters who encounter problems which are subsequently resolved. B4 is less straightforward. Although it clearly merits the title of narrative in terms of the criterion set

out above, it does not appear to contain a story. What is related is merely the sequence of mundane events of a normal weekday in the life of the two central 'characters'. No event appears to have central significance: there is no turn in fortune or problem to be overcome. Events could be subtracted or added with no real difference to the whole. This is narrative without a story.

So out of the eighteen texts we have only five stories, leaving thirteen texts most of which have neither the coherence of conversation nor the coherence of narrative. The exceptions among the thirteen are those that possess some coherence through seeming to imply a story. As to the others, their coherence lies not in functional relationships between their parts, but in a homogeneous consistency. This is particularly true of Series B where both introductory texts represent a strictly conceived class such as men at work (B2). In B3 the statements all concern vehicles and their occupants and spatial relations. Such remorseless consistency of topic is very far removed both from children's conversation and from adult narrative.

An examination of the narrative texts in terms of Genette's categories of mood and voice reveals other peculiarities. A3 and A5 represent classical narration in both mood and voice since in both an omniscient narrator tells the unfocalised story in the past tense and third person. This is not so for Series B or C. In B4 the narrator is omniscient and the narration is unfocalised, but the voice is odd: the action is told in a curious unrelieved generalised present. Furthermore this telling is supplemented by the diegetic narratives of the two narrated 'characters' as Tommy and Karen recount the events of their day. However apart from the shift from third to first person,

the diegetic narrative and the extradiegetic narrative are quite indistinguishable in their banale flatness and emptiness of significance.

Series C, written by four authors, contains a contrast in mood and voice. C5 is a classical narration, focalised through the main character and told in the past tense and first person. However C9, although containing an eventful story of a fall followed by a hospital visit, conveys an inconsequential flatness through the absence of focalisation and the unrelieved generalised present of its third person narration. C7 has the same flatness of mood and voice: again the significance of the story is reduced through its unfocalised presentation in a generalised present, so that the events, presented apparently through the eyes of the watching children, are in no way given any significance by the bald statements that realize the narrative.

As to the genre of the narrative texts, A3, A5 and C4 can be classed as children's stories modelled more or less closely on the folk tale. Echoes of the folk tale are most evident in the recursive patterning of events and their narration in A3 and A5. Such echoes bring a hint of intertextuality that adds substance to the structure of these narratives. In A5 the rule of three shapes the telling as first Billy Blue-hat then Jennifer Yellow-hat and finally the little white cat all experience the same hostility. The first two are scared away by the dog but the cat turns the tables. In A3 there is a similar recursive structure, but the three children attempting to recover the situation are all thwarted. This recursion echoes such tales of repeated trials as The Billygoats Gruff and familiarity with the genre of the folk tale could help the novice reader construe them

and predict later elements.

B4, C7 and C9 bring no such echoes of other texts. The only genre that C7, C9 and the storyless B4 could be said to belong to, is the genre of the initial reading text, since all three possess a narrative flatness, a lack of focalisation and unsureness of voice that robs what story there is of its significance and would deny them a hearing as narratives in their own right. Quite clearly they exist as means to an ulterior end. But the irony is that in departing from the structural demands of the child's tale, the authors have not retained the structures of oral discourse, but have constructed a third type of discourse that offers the child no familiarity, support or intrinsic reward in the process of learning to read. Learning to talk was never like this.

The author of Series A appears to retain as part of her purpose the initiation of the child into the world of the story and thereby invokes meanings and structures which may not be those of conversation but which are found abundantly in books written for children to enjoy. But the authors of Series B seem to deliberately eschew all genres of narratives preferring to meet novice readers in a specially constructed domain of discourse, one likely to be unfamiliar to all those unacquainted with the genre of the early reading text. The authors of Series C appear to oscillate between these positions.

The thinness and insubstantiality of all the narrative texts is made very evident when one attempt to look for signs of the presence of Barthes' codes. There is evidence of the proiaretic, the code of actions, in all the five 'proper' narratives (that is all those containing stories), as there must be, by definition. But the other codes seem almost entirely absent. Perhaps in A5 one could construe

the little old man and the white cat as symbolically significant, the one calling up malevolence and the other a powerful innocence. But there seems a symbolic emptiness in all the other texts. The semic code can be detected again only in Series A where the statements of the animal possessions of the little old woman in the proto-narrative A4 convey a contentment, a lasting quality of character of a kind not evident in any of the other texts. However Series A shows little sign of the cultural code unless one includes such commonsense knowledge as the fact that people live in houses and have possessions. Series B and C are located in a more superficially recognisable world in which watching television and buying newspapers play a part. The code that seems absent from all three series is the hermeneutic. The story in all the narratives is unfolded relentlessly, with no attempt to create tension through delay in revealing what happens.

As I have emphasised in Chapter 4, one cannot fully characterise the structure of a written narrative without taking account of the part played by the reader. Certainly none of these narrative texts can be called writerly since none invites the reader to reconstrue her experience. It is equally certain that most are too thin to merit even the term readerly. While the reader may bring her own experience to gloss the text, she is not asked to make any inferences or any but the most obvious value judgements. In principle there is room for prediction in all the narratives but only A3, A5 and perhaps C5 invite this. In B4, C7 and C9 the events are narrated with such banality that there is no invitation to the mind to leap forward just as there are no gaps for the mind to leap over and no convoluted narrative sequence for the mind to sort out. The implied reader of these texts is essentially manipulated, with no interactive part to play.

What is true of the narrative texts is also true of the non narrative texts, where the child's own experience, value judgements, inference and prediction have no part to play at all. The reader's expected response is not interactive engagement with meaning but behavioural matching of spoken to written words, under the control of the stimulus of the text.

5.2.2

Devices used to realize the discourse structure of these early reading texts

Given their limited coherence it is hardly surprising to find that scarcely any use is made of cohesive devices in these texts. The chief exception appears to be lexical cohesion. But even this is not of the usual sort. In these texts repetition predominates heavily over collocation, contributing to the effect of homogeneity rather than coherence. Of course the repetition is in most cases not really inherent to the narrative but the product of the authors' conception of their instructional role. The assumption is that words must be repeated frequently if they are to be learnt. In series A this repetition is sometimes used to create parallel constructions giving an image of chaining and thereby an echo of the folk tale and a significance to the final sentence. Each sentence has a part to play in a larger whole. The result is a literary coherence of sorts.

Jennifer ran after Billy.
Billy ran after Roger
Roger ran after
the little white dog.
The little white dog
ran away with the ball.
(A3 p.5)

But in the other series it is single nouns that are repeated. The

following example is an extreme case.

I was playing with my ball
I kicked my ball
I ran after my ball
A big boy hit me
A big boy took my ball
(C4 pp.2-10)

In contexts other than an early reading primer such sentences would be bound together by reference, in conjunction with ellipsis. Unlike the repetition quoted from Series A, this repetition contributes nothing to the semantic or aesthetic structuring of the text. The didactic purpose of the authors is undisguised and militates against coherence.

Despite this repetition, the use of endophoric reference has clearly not been entirely eliminated. All three series make some use of reference, particularly of the referential 'the'. 'He', 'she', 'it', 'his' and 'her' are also used. But their distribution is patchy. In all five texts of Series A, referential items account for at least 9% of the words. None of the words in the first three texts of Series B is referential and only 6% of those in B4. In Series C there is greater variation. Five of the texts contain no referential items and in the four remaining texts, all narrative, the proportion varies from 6% in C9, to 15% in C7.

Here, then, is a potential problem. If children of this age are moving in their conversation from deixis or exophoric reference to endophoric reference, the presence of a high proportion of referential items could be disconcerting, as Schallert, Kleiman and Rubin (op.cit.) suggest. Lacking an intonational guide, young children may well be confused as to the identity of the referent. Indeed Richek found that many of the third graders whose reading he studied were unable to supply the antecedents to many of the anaphoric items encountered (Richek 1977). And yet, as I have indicated, to avoid

reference by repetition does not bring the text closer to conversation, it merely makes it sound artificial.

Conversation and narrative each has need of its own set of structuring devices. In conversations with young children the interpersonal dimension binds the utterances together more strongly than the ideational. But in these texts there is no room for the development of an interpersonal relationship between child and author, so the ideational must do all the structuring and this is precisely the dimension that appears least amenable to the child's control.

5.3

Summary of differences in terms of discourse structure

The child whose experience of oral language is of conversation only, has expectations of discourse that are at odds with the demands of these reading texts. Much of the coherence of conversation is established through inter-personal means - through an elaborate dance in which the partners take reciprocal roles and move through patterned sequences taking their cue as much from their partners' stance and intonation as from the words that are spoken between them. The ideational patterning of conversation shifts and alters with changes in mood, whim, passing events and unexpected thoughts surfacing in the mind. Children play their part in these shifts, initiating exchanges and manipulating the topic. The means by which they control the pattern of conversation are more limited than those available to adults: intonation has to bear a heavier load as the range of cohesive devices they can handle with confidence is smaller. However, a heavy use of incorporation and of jointly produced utterances makes up to some extent for the limited range of cohesive ties.

Young children's awareness of the coherence of conversation is limited to the viewpoint of the participant. Their notion of context has not yet been enlarged to include the discourse itself. What a child says is tied in many ways to what has gone before, but this does not mean that the child can view the conversation as an entity, or confidently refer to parts of it.

However, the texts under examination, clearly entities with a recognisable physical form, present the child with quite a different kind of structure. On the inter-personal dimension there is clearly a reciprocity about the relationship between child and author, but instead of the subtle patterning of conversation there is a dull uniformity of role relationship. The author tells and the child identifies the words of the telling and, perhaps, constructs the story if there is one. The author does all the initiating and the child does all the responding, and this is of a very limited kind. There is no room for conversation with the author, no invitation to make value judgements or inferences about the events represented.

Between child and teacher the relationship is similar: the teacher initiates, the child responds and the teacher provides evaluative feedback. This is a classic example of the exchange pattern which Sinclair and Coulthard found to typify the Junior School classroom they studied, and very different from the patterns Wells and Montgomery found characterised conversation between parents and young children at home (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, Wells and Montgomery 1981).

These texts are the product not simply of any didactic agenda, but of a particular kind of didactic agenda. They result from a particular view of what learning to read is about and of the means by

which it is achieved. Through them speaks with greater or lesser disguise, the voice of behaviourism. Control is the keyword. All the texts have controlled vocabularies. All are graded in incremental steps. The child's job is to identify the words on the page. The child's entrance into literacy is along a narrow path of correct responses to the stimulus of a controlled text. The kind of behaviour expected from the child has little to do with the construction of meaning and leaves no room for the initiatives learnt through conversation.

While these texts all lack the interpersonal coherence of conversation, some of them have instead something of the ideational coherence of narrative. Five of these texts, two in Series A and three in Series C, are narratives with stories, albeit thin little narratives, notable for the poverty of their Barthesian codes and for the total absence of the hermeneutic. The two in Series A are classical narrations in mood and voice, modelled on the folk tale although lacking the richness of the original. The three in Series C have a flatness of mood and voice such as to rob the text of any dynamic coherence. As to the rest, the sharpness of focalisation in the implied stories of A4, C3 and C4 give them a degree of coherence. But the non-story narrative in Series B has an oddness of voice and absence of focus or significance. None of the parts gains any importance from its relation to the rest. This is even more true for the five labelling texts and the four remaining statements of stasis texts. Apart from the culminating sentences in A1 and A2, these possess homogeneity rather than the interdependence necessary for coherence.

None of these texts is an example of narrative in any very

powerful sense of the term. But in withholding the full coherence of narrative, or even in many cases any semblance of that coherence, the authors have not achieved any alternative form of coherence which the child used only to conversation, might find easier to recognise. Thus the child who understands and can manipulate the coherence of conversation, can construe such texts as coherent only in terms of the part they play in the social contract with the teacher. On the other hand, the child used to narrative as well as conversation, might experience a sense of recognition with some of these texts and a small degree of satisfaction in their completeness.

6

Summary, discussion and conclusions

Despite the authors' earnest attempts to make their language familiar through careful attention to lexis and syntax, very significant differences remain, both at the rank of the individual utterance and at the rank of discourse structure, between children's pre-school oral language experience and these early reading texts. Some of these differences are avoidable but some are inevitable.

In Series A, of the features of structural configurations and discourse structure that set the texts apart from pre-school oral language, some are simple variants of features that mark adult narrative fiction. The syntax is at times literary, they are cohesive and their sentences carry FSP through patterning of structure. Two of these texts are narratives and although they are thin little structures, they do possess a coherence that is lacking in the texts of Series B and C.

As for Series B and C, they are unlike conversation in respect of

situation, semantics, structural configurations and discourse structure. They are also unlike other varieties of written language, principally because they lack any communicative purpose. Whereas the author of Series A appears to be initiating children into written narrative fiction with learning to read as a means to that end, the authors of the other two series have produced 'reading books' which attempt to sugar the pill of a behaviourist view of learning to read by references to fictional characters and fictional events.

Marked differences between these schemes should not obscure the stronger differences between all three and pre-school oral language. Yet this evidence does not entirely support the views of Schallert, Kleimann and Rubin.

The novice reader may well face more complex vocabulary, sentence syntax and discourse structures than he had previously encountered in speech and therefore would need to extend his knowledge in these areas.

(Schallert, Kleimann and Rubin 1977 p.17).

This does not appear to be entirely the case with these texts. While there are marked differences in discourse structure, in the interpersonal and textual dimensions of semantics and in their realization in mood and theme, nevertheless the vocabulary and syntax tend to be rather simpler than those of the child's oral language, not more complex. What seems more pertinent is Baker's observation that early reading texts manage to divest a familiar vocabulary of any significant meaning (Baker 1980). This view is certainly borne out by the unfocussed texts in Series B and C.

Smith suggests that beginning readers are often misled by their invocation of an inappropriate model from their experience of oral language (Smith 1977). From the evidence of these texts it is clear that oral language would certainly not provide the child with the kind

of model that would facilitate prediction or even comprehension. Wells and Raban suggest that the difficulties caused by the differences between oral language and early reading texts may be very strong for those unfamiliar with the language of books and may be intensified by methods of teaching reading that emphasise word identification at the expense of meaning (Wells and Raban 1976). Again this examination lends support to this view. We need therefore to consider which differences are avoidable and which must inevitably remain, and then explore the means of bridging the gap that remains.

If the interpersonal context in which a child encountered an early reading text were restructured in the direction of a collaborative attempt to construct an enjoyable meaning from the text, then part of the strangeness would disappear. If the texts themselves were to address the child more informally, using some of the contractions common in oral language, another difference could be avoided. If the contents spoke more to the child's emotions, and not exclusively of the factual details of existence, then a further cause of unfamiliarity would be removed.

But teachers might well be resistant to such changes since they would call into question classroom discourse as a whole. For as Romaine observes

.. teachers' ideas about communicative styles in
classroom discourse are based heavily on the norm
of the written language.
(Romaine 1984 p. 181)

Such ideas are not easily changed.

And inevitable differences would remain. Written texts printed for a national readership to last a number of years must always be composed of rather different forms and carry rather different meanings bound together in rather different ways from those that characterise

conversation. Perhaps the most significant inevitable difference lies in discourse structure. While both conversation and the reading of a novel require more than one participant, the relationship between the participants, as I observed in Chapter 4, is rather different. The reader has to a certain extent to subdue herself and be led by the author, even though she may need her view of the world, her experience and her critical faculties if she is to construe the text fully. But she cannot choose to change the sequence of events: she cannot decide that Tom Kitten stays clean or Emma Bovary remains faithful, however much she would like to. She cannot even suggest possible modifications for the author's consideration, for the author is present only in the words of the text, and cannot respond to the reader's initiative.

Thus the complex inter-personal dance of conversation, in which sometimes one partner leads, sometimes the other, can have no counterpart in reading a narrative text. Nor can it with any other kind of printed text. An information book on the workings of the human body will not answer every question the text raises in the reader's mind, nor will the instruction booklet for the washing machine.

Young children appear to find narrative fiction the most accessible form of printed discourse. Bruner suggests that the intention/outcome relationship that runs through narrative fiction is more comprehensible and more interesting to young children than the cause and effect relationship that frames other kinds of written language (Bruner 1984). Children under six or so find it markedly easier to listen to narrative fiction than to books of factual information. Argument, of course, remains quite inaccessible. So,

where they have chosen narrative, the authors of these early reading texts have chosen the right category of discourse. There is room for improvement, as I have shown, but the improved texts would be narrative texts.

The problem becomes one of bridging the gap between conversation and printed narrative. Vilscek and other exponents of the language experience approach including the Breakthrough to Literacy team see that it is possible to make the transition from oral language to books quite unproblematic if the first texts a child is asked to read are the products of her own dictation and the first printed texts "utilize a closely related linguistic pattern" (Vilscek 1965, McKay, Thompson and Schaub 1970). But the child dictating to the teacher is being asked to produce, if not a full narrative, a coherent and explicit monologue, the very kind of language which those with little linguistic experience apart from conversation, are likely to find problematic. Stauffer reports that some children do not find this easy (Stauffer 1970). However faithfully the teacher follows the child's dictation, the words that were once imbued with the meanings of their intonational patterns and of the context in which they were spoken, may now appear strange, remote and colourless in isolation on the page. Children who can dictate fluent narrative texts show familiarity with precisely those features that set written narrative off from conversation. The language experience approach may provide a bridge into the reading of printed texts for some children, but the soundest bridges appear to be themselves constructed of narratives and presuppose extensive experience of narrative.

Rubin takes a rather different approach (Rubin 1978). Recognising that important differences exist between oral and written language she

argues that

The cognitive leaps we expect children to make are enormous
and can perhaps be broken down into more manageable steps.
(Rubin 1978 p.2)

She postulates seven dimensions of difference ranging from modality (the intonational features of speech and the punctuation of written language) to separability of characters, and recommends that the teacher should aim for the child to make progress along one dimension at a time. Rubin's analysis suffers from the absence of a coherent theoretical framework: her list of 'dimensions' appears to be an arbitrary collection of points of difference.

Her recommended strategy runs directly counter to what we know of children's language acquisition. In developing their oral language children do not make progress along one dimension at a time focussing exclusively on intonation before moving into a preoccupation with lexis and then on to syntax. Nor do facilitating parents operate as if they did. Children appear to operate on a number of levels simultaneously, intuitively recognising the interdependence of features at different levels. Children of 4 to 5 seem to learn new sets of social relations, new topics, new meanings and new lexical and syntactic forms in which to articulate these meanings in a way that is highly integrated. Walkerdine's work shows how tightly these elements may be bound together (Walkerdine 1982). Why should learning the language of written narrative be any different?

Durkin's conception of the difference between young children's experience of oral language and the demands of early reading texts is heavily influenced by work on story grammar (Durkin 1981). She cites in particular the work of Stein and Glenn and of Bruce as showing the complexity of the grammatical structures, or schemata, which children

have to learn if they are to construe narratives (Stein and Glenn 1979, Bruce 1979). Her suggestions for bridging the gap come in three parts. Firstly, without suggesting what could be put in their place, she queries the advisability of using stories as material for beginning readers. In the absence of any constructive alternative, this seems to be an avoidance of the issue. Her second suggestion seems equally unproductive: she recommends that beginners should learn about punctuation, a suggestion directly in line with Rubin's piecemeal approach. However her emphasis is reserved for her third suggestion.

... reading to children emerges not only as a means for bridging the gap between spoken and written language but also as a way to (a) develop a schema for "story", (b) expand vocabularies and (c) add to children's knowledge of the world.
(Durkin 1981 p.31)

I have argued in this chapter that even if the five year old is not expected to move from utterance to text in quite the way that Olson claims, nonetheless, if her experience of language is confined to conversation, the books she is confronted with at school are likely to appear very strange (Olson 1977). There will be a mismatch. Part of that mismatch may be attributable to a limited behaviourist view of what reading is and of what is involved in the process of learning to read. But another part of the mismatch is inevitable. It remains to explore in what way hearing stories read aloud can familiarise children with the forms and meanings of written language and so prepare them for the task of learning to read.

This chapter has argued an extreme case. Few children come to school with no experience at all of written language. But as Chapter 6 shows, the range of their experience is very wide. Some children may have been read to daily (or nightly) over many years, amounting to

as many as 300 hours of story reading. Others may have almost never heard a complete story, let alone made any coherent sense of it. What I am arguing here is that it is not experience of conversation that will give children the language that is relevant for learning to read narrative texts. We must look specifically at their experience of narrative.

CHAPTER SIX

An Examination of Studies of Children Read Aloud to at Home before School and at School in the Early years

1

Introduction

For more than fifty years ambitious claims have been made concerning the value of young children hearing stories read aloud. In the last thirty years or so a number of studies have been carried out that investigate this practice. However they do not seem to draw widely on each others' findings and most have received little attention in general. Nor have they made any significant impact on ideas about reading readiness.

These studies do not fall into any neat pattern, but can be roughly grouped into two categories. Some are predominantly quantitative (of the experimental or survey type), whereas others are predominantly observational and interpretive in their orientation and tend to take the form of case studies. So I have arranged them as follows. In Section 2 I examine work on reading readiness in general and in particular the extent to which children's experience of hearing stories is considered to play a part in this, in Section 3 the claims concerning benefits of hearing stories read aloud, in Section 4 the quantitative studies of this practice, and of its relation to childrens' performance in reading-related tasks and/or learning to read, and in Section 5 the observational and interpretive studies. In Section 6 I draw conclusions from this survey of the literature, relevant to the present study.

Reading readiness

Check lists and other measures of reading readiness are, of course, dependent on conceptions of what reading is and of what learning to read involves. They also depend on how the early stages of learning to read are managed in schools. It is not surprising that for the first half of this century research into reading readiness and readiness checklists reflected the prevailing view of learning to read as a process in which the child learner's expectation of the text played little part. Thus they were concerned with two major areas: on the one hand such physical systems as vision, hearing, cerebral dominance and the articulation of speech, and on the other the psychological considerations of visual and auditory perception, emotional maturity, motivation and mental age (Gates and Bond 1936, Russell et al. 1957).

What is perhaps surprising is that such views have persisted in many of those examining reading readiness more recently on both sides of the Atlantic, so that the child's mastery of language is given only a small place among a largely unchanged list of variables considered by a number of more recent investigators (Downing and Thackray 1971, Weintraub et al. 1977).

But other researchers into reading readiness have been more influenced by the changes in thinking charted in Chapter 1. Their work has involved attention to such linguistic features as productive fluency and range of vocabulary, (Loban 1963, Pigeon 1976) comprehension of oral language (Tyson 1976) and the child's awareness of the phonological composition of oral language (Gibson and Levin 1975, Pigeon 1976, Bradley and Bryant 1983).

Widely used check lists of reading readiness such as the Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness Profile (Harrison and Stroud 1956) give considerable emphasis to such language factors.

What is not included in any such profile is any thorough consideration of the child's familiarity with the language of books.

However other investigations approaching reading readiness from a more phenomenological perspective, have noted that many children when they enter school, lack realistic expectations of the nature and rewards of the reading process and that such a lack appears to be negatively associated with rapid progress in the early stages (Reid 1966, Downing 1969, Oliver 1975). But these authors do not make any very explicit connection with children's pre-school experience of hearing stories read aloud.

3

Claims concerning the value of the experience

Although until recently authorities in the teaching of early reading have not considered the experience of hearing stories read aloud to contribute significantly to children's readiness to learn to read, other writers have long held this kind of experience to be centrally relevant for successful later learning. For decades parents have been exhorted to read to their children. Mason, observing from his studies of a poor black rural community in Georgia, that trauma could follow if such sessions were forced on an unwilling child listener, provides a lone voice in urging caution in this activity (Mason 1967).

The Plowden Report voices the more widespread opinion that the experience of looking at the pictures and text of a story while

listening to an adult read it, is one that should be extended to more children of pre-school age (DES 1967 para. 583). And the Bullock Report urges that as a matter of priority children should be introduced to books in the pre-school years, in order to show them some of the pleasures and purposes of reading (DES 1975 p. 97). Individual writers who recommend reading aloud are too numerous to be all included. The five cited below I have chosen for the variety of their particular claims, all of which go beyond those of Plowden and Bullock.

Chambers states that not only does the experience provide children with an appetiser of pleasures to come, but also that through hearing satisfying stories read aloud young children become

... unconsciously familiar with the rhythms
and structures, the cadences and
conventions of the various forms of written
language. They are learning how print
'sounds', how to 'hear it' in their inner ear.
(Chambers 1973 p. 43)

Holdaway adds more, asserting that the experience gives children what he terms 'a well developed set towards literacy'. This he sees as including not only motivational factors and familiarity with written language but also what he calls operational factors and knowledge of the conventions of print. By operational factors he means the various components that make up the child's ability to construe a structured story. Thus predictive and imaginative operations are explicitly included as well as the child's ability to make sense of a language variety which is not supported by the immediate physical context.

Durkin makes similar claims, although she gives slighter emphasis to the conventions of print and the operational factors that Holdaway

stresses. But she places greater emphasis on the value of the experience in teaching children concepts and word meanings that will facilitate learning to read (Durkin 1972).

Clark makes a tentative claim for an even closer connection with learning to read:

Reading to children, especially where this involves frequent repetition of the same stories, may well lead to improved ability to predict one's way through print by predicting the correct word or possible correct words.

(Clark 1976 p. 29)

Wells extends such linguistic claims in arguing that in listening to stories the child is beginning to gain experience

... of the meaning-building organisation of language and of its characteristic rhythms and structures

(Wells 1982a p. 184)

He adds that it is in learning to pay attention to such structures as the major source of meaning the child is being prepared not only for learning to read, but also for the oral language of the classroom, which he characterises as markedly more context-independent than that of the child's home. However he argues that the experience of hearing stories read aloud does not inevitably bring such benefits: much depends on the stories chosen as it is essential to grip the child's imagination. Much also depends on the kind of talk that accompanies or follows the reading since children need to explore the imaginary world of the story and relate it to their own experience.

The educational reports cited above and the five writers quoted make very substantial claims for the beneficial effects of hearing stories read aloud on children's subsequent experience of learning to read. Although, as the previous section has shown, these possibilities have been largely ignored by those working in the area

that is termed reading readiness, empirical work has been carried out that is of clear relevance. This is examined in the following two sections.

4

Quantitative evidence of reading related benefit

I have sub-divided this into three groups: studies of pre-school children at home, studies of children in nursery class and studies of children in the early years of formal schooling. Studies of U.S. Kindergarten classes are placed in the last group for reasons of age comparability.

4.1

Stories encountered at home in the pre-school years

Evidence of the incidence of story reading at home to pre-school children in Britain is limited. Hubbard and Salt found that in 90% of the 33 families they studied in an unnamed Northern industrial community, the pre-school child had been read to by the mother or older siblings (Hubbard and Salt 1975). Wells does not give comparable figures for the incidence of story reading in the 32 children under study, but does show a strong relation with social class, which is also found in other studies (Wells 1981b).

In an examination of the pre-school home environment of children from different parts of Swansea, Chazan, Laing and Jackson compared homes in 'deprived areas' with homes in control areas which were inhabited by families in which the father had a higher occupational status and level of formal education than those in the 'deprived areas' (Chazan et al 1971). The parents in the control areas did more

to encourage interest in books and stories than did those in the 'deprived areas'.

In their study of four year olds in Nottingham, Newson and Newson found that stories played a regular part in the bed-time routine of 56% of the homes in social classes I and II, but the same was true of only 14% of those in social class V (Newson and Newson 1968).

As to studies examining the benefits of this unevenly distributed (and inadequately described) experience, the claims of Durkin and Clark are supported by their own empirical findings and indeed arise from their studies of children who learned to read before entering formal schooling. Clark (op. cit) studied 32 Scottish children, able on school entry, to recognise at least 25 words on the Schonell Graded Word Reading Test (Schonell 1955). The aim of the study was to arrive at some indication of the factors that appeared to have contributed to this early learning success. She concludes that the most important contribution was the parents' perception of education and the consequent support and experiences parents provided for their children. However, despite the claims cited above and despite examining a large number of variables including the extent to which parents were reading aloud to these child readers at the time of the study, she does not examine the children's experience of being read to before they learnt to read for themselves.

Durkin's assertions seem more soundly based, although arising from two studies similar in design to Clark's (Durkin 1966). Like Clark she is concerned to examine readers who were fluent on school entry (defined again in terms of their success on a word recognition test) and like Clark she undertook the research in the hope that information about the ways children learn to read at home would suggest more

effective ways of teaching children to read in school.

However, in her two studies carried out respectively in Oakland, California and New York City, she cast her net more widely than Clark, questioning parents in their homes on a wider range of topics and including several questions on the children's pre-reading experience of hearing stories read aloud. The findings are clear: in the Oakland study, hearing stories read aloud was the only experience examined that all 49 early readers shared. In the later New York study, which included a control group, parents reported that 100% of the early readers had been read to, whereas the same was true of only 73% of the others.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Wells' claims arise from the study of 32 children from a range of social backgrounds, none of whom read fluently on school entry. But some learned with greater ease than others, and, as stated earlier, he found a marked relationship between the extent of their experience of being read to in the pre-school years, (a measurement absent from Durkin's study) and their subsequent performance in reading at the age of seven (Wells 1981b). As to claims concerning the precise manner in which this effect is brought about, because of Wells' data collection methods, these claims like those of Chambers, Holdaway and Clark, are the product of informed and intelligent conjecture rather than an analysis of research data. Most of the recordings made were of only 90 second bursts and so excluded complete stories and also much of the conversation in which the stories were embedded. No recordings were made at the children's bed-time.

Besides these findings of direct connections between the experience of being read aloud to and subsequent success in learning

to read, there are the findings of other researchers who have made connections with reading-related measures concerning such matters as lexical development and general intelligence.

In an experimental study in which 24 'culturally deprived' children aged between 21 and 30 months were read stories regularly over a 3 month period, Fodor found that the children in the experimental group made significantly greater gains than those in the control group in terms of both expressive and receptive vocabulary (Fodor 1966).

Tizard and Rees found a relationship in institutionally raised children, between higher intelligence quotients at 4 years and previous experience of hearing stories read aloud three or more times a week (Tizard and Rees 1974).

Pickert and Chase found that children lacking the experience of listening to stories, performed poorly on the task of re-telling a simple story, judged in terms of their comprehension of the original story, their organisation of the sequence of events and the 'fluency of their expression' (Pickert and Chase 1978). They speculate that the information that the teacher can get from such re-tellings is more informative about the child's likely success in learning to read than are other measures of language use.

In a striking and far more naturalistic study of 48 children between 3½ and 8 years in ten schools in the West Midlands, Wade finds that the experimental group whose parents were encouraged by a letter sent home from school to both tell stories to and elicit stories from their children, produced significantly more sophisticated stories at the end of the six month experimental period in terms of organising principle, structure, content and use of stylistic conventions in both

their retellings of a stimulus story and in their own stories (Wade 1984). These differences were even more marked after eighteen months.

All of these studies look at the experience of being read to in quantitative terms only, although it should be noted that Wells' analysis of his admittedly limited material is not yet complete and may yet yield information on the differential effects of different styles of story telling.

One American study attempts to do just this (Flood 1977). The investigator examined parent to child story telling sessions, rating 36 sets of participants on 14 measures and relating the resulting scores to the children's overall performance on a measure of pre-reading skills which included language factors. The six story-telling measures found to be most closely related to these pre-reading scores, concerned (in descending order of strength of relationship) the total number of words spoken by the child, of questions answered by the child, of questions asked by the child, of preparatory questions asked by the parent, of post-story evaluative questions asked by the parent and of positive reinforcement by the parent.

However the value of these findings is affected by a number of serious limitations. Firstly there is no linguistic or literary framework to allow the investigator to identify the defining characteristics of the utterances under study. Instead these are subjected to nothing more than a crude categorisation and counting process. Secondly the resulting information is not related to the children's success in reading, but to their scores on a set of 'pre-reading related tasks' whose validity is open to question. Thirdly the information is based not on naturalistic data, but on

transcripts of parents all reading the same story, one chosen by the investigator. Certainly the high incidence of didactic questioning by the parents seems to indicate that they perceived this story reading event as a teaching task, rather than a spontaneous and intrinsically pleasurable activity. Consequently I am cautious about interpreting the results: they tell us little about the significant characteristics of story-reading episodes with young children and even less about those characteristics which can be clearly associated with subsequent success in learning to read.

4.2

Evidence concerning stories encountered in the nursery class

Dewey, of course, saw stories as a distraction from the practical activities which should be the proper centre of children's school life throughout their formal schooling, not just in the nursery years (Dewey 1907). On this side of the Atlantic Piaget's vastly influential work on children's mental development has led to a similar stress on concrete activities for young children (Piaget 1951). Whether the product of such influences or whether arising from other causes, it would appear that reading aloud does not play a significant part in the activities of all nursery classes. In a study of free play in a Cambridge nursery school, Clark et al make no mention of books or stories (Clark et al 1969). And in their study of interactions between adults and children in both playgroup and nursery class, Wood et al make only passing mention of story-time (Wood, McMahon and Cranston 1980). In a Schools Council Working Paper, Taylor et al list 30 objectives in a questionnaire designed for nursery teachers in England and Wales, without making any specific reference to books (Taylor et al 1972).

Those nursery teachers who do read to their children tend to read

to small self-chosen groups rather than to the whole class. Marshall et al, in a study examining the practices of a self-selected sample of nursery teachers interested in books, report that most favoured this approach (Marshall et al 1971).

However in Scotland Lomax found that when story reading was treated in this way, that is as one of a number of competing activities from which the children could choose, there was a wide variation in the extent to which children chose to join the story sessions (Lomax 1977). 14 high-interest children (who chose this activity frequently) were compared with 14 low interest children. The parents of the high interest children reported that they read stories to their children at home at least once a week and usually once a day. This was significantly more often than was reported by the parents of the low interest children. The high interest children were rated significantly more highly by their teachers on their ability to listen to stories.

This evidence seems to indicate that children unused to hearing stories read aloud at home, need more than the mere opportunity to listen to a story at school as one of a competing range of activities in the highly distracting atmosphere of a nursery classroom. It is perhaps not surprising that such children stay only a short time in the story corner before they are lured away by the splashing of water or the bashing of plasticene. This evidence does not prove that children lacking home experience of stories cannot be helped to enjoy listening to them in nursery class.

In a later investigation Lomax attempted to isolate and measure some of the short-term effects of hearing stories (Lomax 1979). In her report, which is highly sceptical of the value placed on educational practices such as story reading whose effects have not been formally assessed, she states that the supposed effects seem to all but disappear once stringent controls are introduced. Her main study is of 17 children attending the afternoon session of a nursery class, who heard a collection of specially constructed stories read by the nursery staff. This experimental group was matched by a control group of 17 children attending the morning session of the same class.

The staff were asked to read the stories to the class of children exactly as they were written and to note the children asking for them or looking at them. All except the youngest and shyest children were given pre and post tests on their understanding of 16 words in the stories. Analysis of the results revealed no gains in vocabulary that could be attributed to hearing the stories. Seven of the 17 children heard at least one story more than once, but again no relationship was found with word learning.

Lomax admits that the study lacks naturalism and that a more 'natural' story telling study would involve the reading of stories selected by the teacher (or even, one might add, by the children). I would also add that the teacher's handling of the event was probably also markedly affected by the instruction not to deviate from the written text. This instruction conflicts sharply with Wells' observation, cited above, on the importance of the conversation that accompanies and follows story telling.

Wells, like Chambers, has remarked on the importance of reading

stories that grip children's imagination. It is doubtful whether Lomax's specially constructed stories were written with the skill possessed by children's writers such as Maurice Sendak or Shirley Hughes. Nor does Lomax give any indication of how familiar these children were with stories or how long they had been in the nursery class. All of these considerations detract from the significance of her findings.

Indeed the importance of the teacher's handling of the situation is indicated in a pilot study by Lomax using published stories in two other schools. In one school the teacher spent about 20 minutes on each story, including time given to relevant discussion. In the other only 10 or 11 minutes were spent on each story. In the first school "small but completely consistent" differences were found between the vocabulary scores on a post-test of the story children and those of the control group, in favour of the story children. Two further points are worth noting. Low participation (in terms of comments) was associated with poor knowledge of words on the post test. On average, the children knew a slightly greater proportion of words that had not been explained to them than words which had been explained.

Both of these observations indicate that the child's active participation is of central importance if hearing stories read aloud is to contribute to vocabulary growth. Ironically, the main study discussed above seems designed to reduce this participation to a minimum. Thus the negative results are hardly surprising and cannot be held to indicate a lack of connection between vocabulary extension and hearing stories.

Read critically Lomax's studies suggest that a quantitative approach is not very informative: closer attention needs to be paid to

the nature of the interaction between teacher and child. Such close attention is given in a study discussed in section 5.4, developed out of similarly detailed and qualitative studies of home story reading interactions (Cochran-Smith 1982a 1982b).

4.3

Evidence concerning stories encountered in the early years of formal schooling

An early study carried out with 2,500 kindergarten children in California is concerned only to categorise children's spontaneous responses to undocumented readings of unspecified stories by their class teachers (Cappa 1958). A desire to look at the book and requests for a re-reading were the most frequent responses, far outnumbering such responses as painting or dramatic play. This result appears trivial but it does show that when left to approach story reading in their own way this large number of teachers gave children an experience which they wanted to explore further.

A similarly large sample was used by Wetstone and Friedlander who studied the story comprehension of 247 American children in Kindergarten through third grade, to compare their understanding of stories presented in different modes (Wetstone and Friedlander 1974). This understanding was evaluated by multiple choice questions on the presentation of the stories through videotape, audiotape and live readers. A significant difference was found in favour of the videotape and live presentations, as against the sound tape presentations and a slight and non-significant difference in favour of the videotape as against the live presentation. However, the circumstances in which the data were obtained lack naturalism: the

live presenter read to the children following instructions to stay close to the text (apparently eschewing conversational interaction) and to stand in front of the classroom, and may even (the report is unclear on this point) have been someone other than the regular class teacher. The report is also unclear as to the extent to which the videotape included a visual representation of the events of the story. Consequently the results need to be treated with caution and it cannot be concluded that young children have greater difficulty in understanding a live story reader than a videotape of a story being read.

In a similarly unnaturalistic study of 60 American children in kindergarten through fifth grade, Bohannon and Friedlander tested children's preference for hearing meaningless narrative (in which the syntax had been 'randomised') delivered with a lively intonation as against meaningful narrative (the same story but with the syntax undisturbed) delivered in a monotone (Bohannon and Friedlander 1973). They found a significant development towards more decisive selection of the 'meaningful' texts in the higher grades. They conclude that children's listening competence cannot be assumed to operate as an essentially meaning oriented system, but this conclusion seems open to question. In naturalistic situations the systems of intonation and syntax are not usually in opposition. As has been noted in Chapter 3, intonation is not merely a decorative feature of spoken language: together with aspects of syntax it serves to realize the information structure of the propositional meaning that is itself principally realized by syntax and lexis. There is overlap between the two systems. Consequently such findings could be construed to indicate that young children find intonation rather than syntax, a more

accessible guide to meaning. Again one should not conclude that young children cannot make sense of stories read aloud.

Other studies have looked at language gains. In a series of experiments in which carefully constructed stories were read to 275 five year old children in Hull, Farmer found by classic pre and post-test means, that difficult new words could be learned successfully without the use of pictures, other reference or direct definitions (Farmer 1978). The children could not themselves define these words, but could pick out pictures appropriate to them. Important variables were found to be the clarity and variety of the local context in which the word occurred, whether the word was a new concept or simply a new label, the child's measured intelligence, the level of difficulty of the story, the variety of stories heard, the number of different words per story and the school attended by the child.

Although the stories used in this study are also artificially constructed, the teachers seem to have been less constrained than in Lomax's main study. It should also be noted that the stories were read to the whole class and thus presumably did not have to compete with the plasticene. The variables considered important by Farmer can be taken to indicate the need for a closer study of such interactions: in particular the significance of the school attended can be seen to indicate the possible significance of the style of approach of different teachers. But ironically Farmer fails to consider such possibilities, perhaps because they conflict with her Chomskyan assumptions about language development and the quantitative nature of her approach.

Cohen's study of second graders in 'deprived areas' of New York

City is shaped by a similar quantitative methodology, but is informed by a view of language learning that attributes importance to more than mere exposure (Cohen 1968). Unlike Farmer's study, the manner of the teacher's delivery, the extent of discussion, the ideas that the story language embodies and the way that stories are incorporated into the life of the classroom, are all considered as variables to be controlled. Like Farmer, she is concerned to establish a connection between the experience of hearing stories and vocabulary extension, but she adds to this a further concern: to establish a connection with improvement in reading comprehension. The children under study were poor readers, lacking in motivation. Cohen hypothesised that this could be ascribed to a lack of experience of books as a source of pleasure and a lack of familiarity with appropriate linguistic forms. In a controlled experiment, teachers of 155 experimental children selected stories from 50 published texts placed in each classroom. These texts were chosen by the investigator for their 'emotional and conceptual appropriateness'. Each teacher read one of these stories to the class every day of the school year. This reading was guided by explicit instructions recommending discussion, dramatisation, use of illustrative material and a variety of 'follow up' activities. Teachers were also asked to pay particular attention to the phrasing, dramatic quality and pacing of their reading. Pre and post-tests showed significantly greater increases in word knowledge and in reading comprehension for the experimental group. Cohen concludes:

The importance of reading to children as a precursor to success in learning to read has been shown to be vital in the case of socially disadvantaged children who do not have experience with books at home.

(Cohen op. cit. p. 213)

Porter's study of fourth, fifth and sixth graders in an inner city

area yields similar results (Porter 1969). High school students were recruited to read to the 21 experimental classroom groups for two half hour periods a week. Pre and post-tests of reading achievement produced significantly greater improvements for the experimental group in terms of vocabulary, comprehension and total reading. These improvements were particularly marked for the experimental fourth graders.

In a four year study in Australia of eight children between the ages of six and ten years, G Brown finds significant correlations between the sophistication of the children's personal constructs of story (as revealed in their own story telling, both spoken and written, and their retellings of well known folk tales), their background of hearing stories and their scores on a reading achievement test, leading him to conclude that the ability to use story language is closely tied to reading achievement, especially beyond the early stages (Brown 1979). However the connection established remains that of correlation rather than cause and effect.

4.4

Conclusions to be drawn from these quantitative studies

Despite the differing methodologies of these studies, they do seem to point to a common conclusion: hearing the 'right' stories read aloud in the 'right' way at home and/or at school contributes to the extension of children's vocabulary and is associated with improvements in reading. However none of these studies has any degree of linguistic or literary sophistication nor pays close attention to any other characterisation of the texts or any other dimension of the interactions between adult and child. Cohen's study (op. cit) is

tantalising in its failure to provide details of such interactions. So only the most tentative conclusions can emerge about which are the 'right' stories and what is the 'right' way of reading them.

Such indications as these suggest that the 'right' stories are published stories rather than those constructed by an investigator, and that furthermore they should be emotionally and conceptually appropriate and chosen by the teacher and children rather than foisted on them. Reading them in the 'right' way seems to involve a more leisurely approach including discussion as an important element. However, many of these investigators, in striving to construct carefully controlled experiments, have sacrificed naturalism and instead imposed constraints on both teachers and children. Lomax recognises this as a limitation, Cohen attempts valiantly to reduce it to a minimum, but nonetheless it must restrict the validity of their findings. When left to their own devices it is unlikely that parents and teachers read stories to their children in the ways shown in many of these studies.

5

Observational and interpretive studies

5.1

Monroe's presentation of the development of book behaviour

The first of these studies examined here is not the product of first-hand observation, but is included because it attempts to chart a qualitative change in children's experiences of books in the pre-school years. Drawing on naturalistic data provided by Gesell and

Ilg in their studies of child development, Monroe identifies seven successive stages of typical book behaviour in children (Gesell and Ilg 1943, Monroe 1951). Each state is related to an approximate age of onset, but Monroe notes cautiously:

The rate and age at which each stage appears depend upon the interests and abilities of the individual child, upon the richness of the environment in books and upon adults who take the time to read books and talk to him.

(Monroe 1951 p7)

Unfortunately, probably because of the prevailing conceptions of learning to read at the time of its publication, this study has not received much attention. But in its naturalistic basis, its focus on books and its detailed characterisation of children's behaviour, it was a valuable addition to research studies in this area.

The seven stages move from the manipulation of books as objects at around 12 months, through pointing, naming, construction of a simple narrative, memorisation of part of a text, reasoning and prediction of a story's outcome. The final stage is reached at around four years when the beginnings of a personal taste for fantasy or realism become evident and the child shows marked skills in verbatim memorisation, insisting on stories being read with the wording quite unchanged.

Monroe's note of caution is not enough: These developmental stages are presented as if they held true for all children and as if, as with Piaget's conception of cognitive development, children's progress through them varied only in terms of the chronological ages at which they moved on from one stage to another. But the behaviour they represent can surely be found only in literate cultures. And even within those cultures it is highly likely that such behaviour is not evenly distributed through all social groups. As we have seen, different social groups in Britain give their pre-school children

differing amounts of relevant experience. It is very doubtful whether a survey similar in design to that carried out by Gesell and Ilg, but taking in a wider sector of the social spectrum, would produce substantially similar information. There is no *prima facie* reason to suppose that children lacking experience of sharing books with adults would ever arrive at the later stages. Furthermore, the study is limited to characterising only the observable behaviour of the child.

5.2

Case studies of individual children at home

The work of those who have studied their own children's early encounters with literature is a rich and fascinating source. Of course the development these investigations chart in their children should also be seen as the product of particular cultural circumstances rather than behaviour typical of an age group.

White presents an account of her daughter Carol's experience of books from 2 years, and of the changing and increasingly complex relationship between what Carol makes of the text and the 'reality' of her own first-hand experience (White 1954). This detailed and sensitive journal does not show an externally observed succession of book-related behaviour patterns, each one neatly replacing what has gone before, but a much more complicated progression. It is not easily divided into distinct stages since forms of behaviour from many of Monroe's categories seem to co-exist simultaneously. Monroe's categories seem to be based on a more superficial view of what can happen between a child and books over the course of three or four years than the one that informs White's account. As Carol moves from the game of answering "wassat?" questions about pictures at two years

to ruminating at five years on the meaning of a story encountered some four months previously, the development is one which is giving her new ways of interpreting the world and organising her mental life.

This development seems to be characterised by a three fold urge in the child: a determination to make sense of the human predicaments and the actions at the centre of the stories that are read to her, to come to know the shape and pattern of these stories, and to master their language. Her mother tries to help Carol satisfy this complex urge by assisting her in bringing relevant first-hand experience to books. This seems to be essential to the understanding and satisfaction that Carol takes from them. The mother also helps Carol to interpret events and objects in 'real' life by invoking a shared memory of fiction, and notes that the ideas and language of the books they have shared both colour Carol's ordinary conversation and dominate her fantasy play.

White remarks that Carol's first encounter with a particular book is often tense: in her early years especially, it is only through repetition that she relaxes as she comes to know the story. Nor does her development in making meanings with literature proceed quite as unproblematically as Monroe's stages imply. Illustrations often seem to confuse more than they illuminate. Until she is about three years old, Carol, although capable of understanding a story sequence through words, cannot be convinced of the single identity of the same creature depicted in different poses and settings on successive pages. She finds particularly confusing the depiction of events that are, in the terms of the story, purely imaginary.

To deal with the confusion that comes from Carol's inability or refusal to construe the words and the pictures in a way that the

author expects, her mother finds herself involved in a vast amount of explanation. She feels she needs to draw on all the large store of first hand and literary experience that she shares with Carol if she is to make sense of Carol's questions and references during story telling sessions, and remarks that Carol's father finds this explanation much harder since he lacks this quantity of shared experience. These valiant attempts often fail to illuminate the story to Carol's satisfaction: there are times when the strength of Carol's idea of what ought to be defeats any attempt to persuade her to a different interpretation, and there are books such as Jemima Puddleduck where the weight of problematic information in the text is so great that all pleasure is suffocated (Potter 1908).

But even where the explanations (which are never produced unless requested by Carol) are not so numerous as to smother her pleasure in the story, they nonetheless occupy a significant amount of story time. As her mother puts it:

In all this, a child's first experience with stories and pictures, there is an immense amount of explaining to do. In sheer quantity of words, the actual stories Carol has read to her represent only a fraction beside all my amplifying remarks at the time of reading and afterwards.
(White op. cit. p.61).

White's is, of course, a highly personal account, coloured by the quality of her affection for her daughter and her love of literature. This emotional involvement is a long way from the detachment of the investigators referred to in Section 4 of this Chapter. But it allows us to see the child's experiences of hearing stories as something richer, more complex, potentially more powerful in general and at the same time more difficult to predict in particular instances than anything we learn about from the quantitative studies.

White's study has the strengths of a case study. What she makes

of her daughter's experience is a complex progression that in its detail, or even in its central features may not be true for all children raised in story reading homes. But her contribution is to suggest that the experience can be as complex and as central to the child's developing understanding of the world as she has shown. So it suggests richer ways of conceiving of this experience and other things to note besides the child's understanding of new words. Furthermore it supports Wells' conjecture cited earlier in indicating the importance of the surrounding explanatory conversation in helping the child to win through to the reward of making sense of a story. As a case study its value is that it gives us new ways of looking and new things to look for.

Butler's is also a case study and has a similar emotional investment (Butler 1975). She writes of her granddaughter Cushla's developing experience of books from her first encounters at three months to independent reading at six years. Suffering from severe physical handicaps which drastically limited her direct experience of the world, Cushla was read to a great deal from a very early age. This was partly to soothe her and partly to compensate in some way for her physical limitations by allowing her to experience vicariously what other children experience at first hand. Whereas White is more concerned to chart the child's literary experience, its relation to fantasy and to first-hand experience, in this and a later work, Butler stresses the connection between 'early book usage' and the skills involved in independent reading at a later stage (Butler 1980). She asserts that experience of the human voice producing book language from print makes print friendly and familiar and that a lack of this familiarity is the explanation for much reading failure. Certainly

her account of Cushla's growing command over the meanings and transcription conventions of printed stories, indicates that the first provides both the context and the reward which makes construing the second an easier, more comprehensible and more satisfying task.

Again, as a case study, it gives us a new way of conceptualising the relationship between hearing stories read aloud and the task of learning to read. Early literary experience can be seen as enabling the child to see the process of dealing with the conventions of print as something not totally unfamiliar and a necessary part of an activity that brings its own complex rewards.

In a study of their daughter Anna's experience of being read to between the ages of 12 months and 5 years, Crago and Crago move from viewing Anna's development behaviouristically, as overt verbal responses "to the conditioning effect of the environment we provided" (p. 12) towards a conception of this process as essentially mental and social (Crago and Crago 1983). They write

Sharing a book with a young child is a supremely interactive process in which it is impossible to see any of the child's behaviour as 'purely' spontaneous (Crago and Crago 1983 p. 22)

Interjections and conversations initiated by Anna were found to be more informative of her thinking than questions posed by her parents which tended to elicit only perfunctory responses. Anna's own monologues, her play and her drawings also gave her parents much valuable insight into her kinds of understanding and the relation between her experience of books and her current pre-occupations.

White, Butler and Crago and Crago are all concerned to examine a child's literary development over a period of years. In studying their daughter Rachel, Scollon and Scollon are concerned to examine her skills with literature at two years old (Scollon and Scollon

1979). They conclude that she was 'literate before she learned to read' since she knew how to focus on books, how to become an author when telling stories about herself, how to refer to stories in talk and how to take from stories linguistic forms and ways of framing knowledge to enrich her oral repertoire.

Snow sees the use of print as the crucial defining feature of literacy and therefore rejects Scollon and Scollon's conception of the 'literate' two year old. In her own study of one child's interaction with his academic mother between the ages of eighteen and thirty six months, she presents those interactions involving books as a special instance of the initiation into decontextualised language that characterises the learning of language in such middle class homes (Snow 1983). She isolates three key features of such interactions - semantic contingency, scaffolding and accountability procedures. Semantically contingent utterances are produced by the parent to expand, extend, clarify or answer questions and are shown to be as productive in literacy development as they are in oral language development. Scaffolding, a term taken from Bruner denoting the parental moves to make a difficult task more manageable by reducing the child's freedom in its performance, is also shown to have a value in literacy development (Bruner 1978). So to do accountability procedures whereby the adult keeps the child from straying from the task. Snow claims that all these features characterise the kind of interaction with books that appears to be conducive to learning to read.

The findings show a remarkable congruence: the children all bring to the story session an active concern in the business of making meaning. The meanings they make result from the interweaving of

literary and first hand experience. Story times are characterised by conversations which encourage this interplay and allow the child to take the initiating role while the parent acts supportively. Through such experiences children take on the language of books which they then use for their own purposes. They also gain a familiarity with the conventions of print in a context which gives these children a clear idea of the end results of the process in which adult readers are engaged when they make use of these print conventions.

5.3

Ethnographic case studies of the part played by reading aloud to young children in contrasting social groups

In a rather terse report of a study undertaken in the San Diego homes of an unspecified number of 2½ year olds, Teale reports 'significant variation in story reading events' (Teale 1984). One mother read the story through without pause for comment or question, another encouraged extensive conversation relating objects in the picture to the child's own experience, and the child in a third home mumbled along in concert with her mother's reading.

Heath sets such differences in context. She chooses the path of the ethnographic case study to explore the way in which the practice of reading aloud is embedded in other cultural practices of particular social groups (Heath 1982a, 1982b, 1983). She shows that the marked differences existing between social groups in respect of sharing books with young children, are not confined to the amount of time devoted to the activity: they also concern the very nature of the activity and the way in which the participants engage in it. In her studies she concerns herself with both a wider social range than do Monroe, White

et al, and a richer conception of the significant features of story-related events than is provided by the authors of the quantitative studies.

Heath is concerned to examine the 'literacy events' in which children from three different backgrounds participate and sees these events as

... Occasions in which written language is integral to the nature of the participants' interactions and their interpretive processes and strategies.
(Heath 1982b p.50)

Thus the term includes references to the events, characters and language of stories as these are invoked to illumine the current topic of conversation. Heath sees that what children are learning in early literacy events is 'ways of taking' from books. These 'ways of taking' involve the construction of meaning and the interweaving of meanings gained from books with those arrived at in other ways. This conception is, of course, with the exception of Snow's study, broadly similar to those provided in the individual studies cited above. But approaching the subject as an ethnographer, Heath is concerned to identify sharply different 'ways of taking' and to see each way of taking as an integral part of a broader cultural pattern.

Her studies are instructive in three ways. Firstly they provide fine-grained mentalistic descriptions of literacy events which enlarge our awareness of what young children might be learning about written language, about stories and about reading since they are richer in some respects than the pictures provided by the individual studies. Secondly they give us a conception of reading aloud to young children as a cultural practice which both influences and is influenced by other cultural practices, and thus takes different forms in different social groups. Thirdly, by explicating the fit or lack of fit between

these home events and the literacy events children are engaged in at school, these studies indicate in a more subtle and detailed way than other studies, the nature of the connection between children's experiences of books at home and their subsequent success in learning to read at school. All of these points are germane to this study.

The social groups studied are three different communities in the South East of the United States. They are 'Maintown', a mainstream, middle-class, school oriented community, 'Roadville' a white mill community of Appalachian origin and 'Trackton' a black mill community of recent rural origin.

Heath finds that Maintown parents expect their children to develop habits and values which attest to their membership of a literate society. The bed-time story is a major event and is characterised by a structured interactive dialogue through which the child learns a set of rules that govern literacy events. What seems to be particularly significant to Heath about the rules learnt in these Maintown homes is that books are not apart from the rest of life: their meanings both depend on other experiences and also shape the way we construe these other experiences. Heath claims that these central lessons about the nature of literacy and the relation of literature to life are learnt with active enjoyment by two and three year old children in the most informal circumstances. Certainly this is congruent with the findings of the individual studies cited earlier.

She emphasises that not all children are initiated into habits of mind and oral responses that fit so closely to those rewarded in the intermediate grades. Her data on 'Roadville' and 'Trackton', arrived at through a long ethnographic study of the two communities, reveals other 'ways of taking' from books. Despite their parents placing a

high value on school success, children from both of these communities are by and large unsuccessful in school. Heath relates this to the nature of the literacy events in which pre-schoolers participate.

In Roadville children are given more restricted 'ways of taking' from books through their bed-time story sessions. This introduction involves children encountering books in a decontextualised way, with emphasis on unquestioning acceptance of what books contain rather than the forging of connections with the child's own experience. Shortly before entry to school, pre-school work books are introduced in ways that demand from the child obedience and rule-following.

Thus Heath regards it as unsurprising that Roadville children perform fairly well at school in the early grades, where the bits of knowledge about literacy that they have acquired and their ability to answer 'what' questions are well rewarded. Their later falling off in school performance is also seen as predictable since they are unprepared for questions which ask them to show independence and manipulation of meanings.

Literacy events in Trackton, the poor black community, are sparser than in Roadville, are rooted in a very different oral culture and take a very different form. In Trackton homes, Sunday school tracts are the only reading materials expressly directed to children. Pre-schoolers play an often reluctant part in games of school with older siblings, but adults do not read to children nor tell them bed-time stories. This Heath sees as part of a wider pattern of parent-child relationship: parents do not take on a tutoring role in developing children's oral language.

In this oral language environment which makes so few concessions to their immaturity, Trackton pre-schoolers learn to construct stories

which often seem to have no point and no obvious beginning or end. They do not decontextualise their experience, nor do they interpret objects or events in terms of their constituent features, but rather by configurational links of a metaphorical kind. Thus when they go to school, not only are they unprepared for their encounters with printed materials, but also they are unfamiliar with the 'what' questions of the early grades and in consequence score in the lowest percentile range on the Metropolitan Readiness tests (Hildreth et al. 1966).

They do very poorly in the area of language arts from the earliest grades, failing to adopt the rules of social interaction for school literacy events. Their ability to link items or events metaphorically is not tapped in school and indeed may conflict with teacher expectations.

Heath's findings indicate that what contributes positively to children's developing literacy in the long term, is the way in which children are helped to construct and manipulate the meanings of written texts. Perhaps the central lesson that the Maintown children have learnt is that to those who will struggle for their meanings, books give semantic rewards that contribute to the continually evolving organisation of experience and of the mind itself. Knowledge of this sort may be taken for granted by the teacher in the early grades. She may consider it as given rather than attempt to ensure that it is created in children's encounters with the didactic activities she invites them to engage in.

Pre-school literacy events in Roadville seem, according to Heath's account, to be heavily modelled on such didactic practices. Heath does not state this explicitly, let alone explore why this should be so. What she does note is that as pre-school preparation they are

only moderately successful. Her descriptions of these events in Roadville homes show that the children are often reluctant, bored and restless as they are taken through their alphabet books or involved in other such activities.

Heath's work has built a bridge between the claims summarised in Section 3, the quantitative studies in Section 4 and the individual case studies in this section. It supports, amplifies and explains these quantitative studies and does so by means of construing mainstream children's experience of hearing stories read aloud as the kind of literary experience which Chambers and the authors of the case studies put forward. There is a remarkable congruence with Wells' findings and also his speculations cited above (Wells 1982a). Like Wells, Heath sees the importance of the adult child conversation in which story time is embedded as helping children to establish connections between their first hand experience and their experience of stories. To see this as establishing a 'way of taking' from books is to understand the significance of such conversation in quantitative studies. The contrast she has shown us, between the 'ways of taking' that are characteristic of different social groups provides a richer explanation of the differential experience of children from different social groups in the business of learning to read in school, than quantitative contrasts in terms of time spent on hearing stories.

Heath's work adds to the pictures we get from the individual studies by enriching our understanding of what children can learn and the interactive means by which this can be achieved, it adds a cultural dimension to such descriptions, presenting reading aloud as an integral part of an interdependent set of cultural practices and it

shows the importance of the relationship between the literacy events of home and school.

But not only does this work illumine and extend other findings, it also indicates new ways of investigating the area. Firstly it indicates that in examining child adult interactions, whether at home or in the early years of school, close attention should be paid to their semantics and to their discourse structure.

Secondly, it points to the possibility that Roadville and Trackton children might be better served by literacy events in the early years of school more closely modelled on those of the Maintown homes, through which they might be helped to achieve a form of literacy that would be more than merely a superficial adjunct to their oral dealings with the world. However, such learning might well seem foreign and disturbing to their families. Heath's research thus provides a strong case for examining 'literacy events' in a nursery class serving an area where literacy plays a marginal part in the adult culture and very little in the exchanges between adults and children.

But one should be cautious before extrapolating too neatly from Heath's findings to our problems in teaching working class children to read in England. This is for two reasons. Firstly Heath provides little precise reference to her primary data in her studies of Maintown, Roadville and Trackton. Instead she presents these three communities as homogenous entities, ignoring any internal differences. The uniformity of these communities has an unreality about it and could lead to inappropriately rigid conclusions as to how their children should be taught.

Secondly, we should remember that there are many differences between the cultures and institutions of the South Eastern part of the

United States and those of England. Thus the precise nature of Heath's findings is less important for us than her ways of conceiving and construing these.

5.4

An ethnographic case study of the part played by reading aloud to children in a nursery class serving a middle-class area in the U.S.A.

Using the concepts that inform Heath's own work, her student Cochran-Smith carried out a case-study investigation of literacy events in a nursery school serving a Maintown residential area (Cochran-Smith 1982a 1982b). Focussing her attention on 100 story telling sessions, Cochran-Smith found these to be similar in type to those observed by Heath in such children's homes, despite obvious differences in terms of the demands of institutional life and the ratio of children to adults. The pictures of the literacy events in this particular nursery class is very different from that of the generalised first-grade class which Heath draws. Cochran Smith notes that the nursery story tellings, like those observed by Heath in Maintown homes, were interactive events in which the children were dealing with more than ritualised, fragmentary and decontextualised exchanges. Like the home story experiences in Maintown, they were joint ventures in which meanings were cooperatively woven, by teacher and children, between the book and the children's own first hand experiences.

Although similar in broad outline to Heath's picture of storytelling in Maintown homes, Cochran-Smith's analysis of these nursery interactions gives a rather more detailed and dynamic account, one that is certainly far richer than any of the studies cited in

Section 4. She finds that the teacher-pupil dialogue of these nursery storytellings is patterned and underlain by conventions of turn taking which give the child participants a kind of scaffolding akin, it would seem, to that identified by Snow (op. cit.). The adults' questions and incomplete phrases make the support on which the children's responses can be slotted. This framework also gives the children essential assistance in the activity of sorting out and integrating story information. Cochran-Smith invokes Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky 1978) and sees that the nursery teacher, like the Maintown parent, is helping children to play their parts in joint activities which later they will be able to carry out for themselves. Cochran-Smith separates these activities into three categories. The first category concerns simply the teacher's attempts to persuade the children into appropriate physical and mental attitudes for the story to start. The other two, like those of Heath's Maintown homes, are concerned with bringing the children's experience of life to books and their experience of books to life. To facilitate this interplay, a teacher contributes a wealth of meta-narrative information that enables the children to construe the information within the narrative, so that in terms of constructing meaning

... the story reader essentially transformed the usually internalised and automatic process common to the adult readers of this literate community into an outwardly explicit and very gradual sense building process for the group of young literary apprentices who sat before her listening to stories.

(Cochran-Smith 82b p.11)

Cochran-Smith sees that through this explicit guidance the teacher enables the children to make more extensive use of four kinds of knowledge. Firstly there is knowledge of the 'real' world, secondly knowledge of literary conventions, thirdly knowledge of narrative

structure and fourthly knowledge of how to respond as members of a reading audience. However the central irony is, as Cochran-Smith observes, that the teacher's goal in these sessions is always to share a good story. It is never one of instruction, not even instruction in how to enjoy a good story. This echoes Heath's observation, cited above, that children in Maintown homes learn central lessons about the nature of literacy and the relation of literature to life with active enjoyment in the most informal circumstances.

Cochran-Smith's work provides us with a rich account of the experiences of Maintown children in a nursery class where they are taught by a teacher untrammelled by the institutional demands of the early grades and possessed, instead, of a rich belief in both the pleasures of literature and the capabilities of young children. These convictions and the patterns of behaviour they engender, appear to overlap considerably with those of the children's parents, and so the children are ensured a continuity of experience of literacy between home and school, even more unbroken than that indicated by Heath. Again this suggests the potential value of a study that examines a nursery classroom where an attempt is being made to provide a similar initiation into literary meaning making for children who do not come from Maintown homes.

An ethnographic approach has enabled Heath and Cochran-Smith to show the conceptual richness of a 'way of taking' from books, its relevance to later school learning, its association with the homes of particular social groups, and that the nursery classroom can (at least for children from Maintown homes) provide the context for the kind of social interaction that encourages children to engage in this mental activity. A closer linguistic examination of a few such interactions

might reveal more of the means by which this is achieved.

5.5

Other interpretational studies of stories and story time in nursery and infant classrooms

However, many nursery children appear to find listening to stories tedious. The children studied by Beveridge and Brierley over three months in their nursery classroom, revealed in their conversations that they disliked the passivity of listening to stories, which they contrasted unfavourably with doing and making (Beveridge and Brierley 1982). The investigators note, however, that the teacher in this classroom demanded accommodation from the children and discouraged interjections.

This does not seem untypical of nursery classrooms. In their study of 30 children in nine different nursery schools and classes, Tizard and Hughes find that the teachers tended to use story reading as an opportunity to impose their educational aims by asking 'stimulating' questions to which the children frequently failed to respond (Tizard and Hughes 1984). They comment that the staff often appeared to come between the children and the story, and thus to bring about the loss of delight and excitement. They conclude that storyreading at school is better ordered than at home but that the children are denied an active contribution.

Yet in a study that predates the work of Heath and Cochran-Smith and is not explicitly focussed on literacy or the sharing of stories. King identifies those understandings which permit pupils to operate successfully in the worlds of meaning that form the core of the curriculum in English infant classrooms (King 1978). He

finds that the understanding of 'story worlds' and the ability to differentiate these from everyday 'reality' are essential factors. His research methods consist of long term observation and follow-up interviews with teachers which reveal that they thought some of their pupils had not properly defined the story world as a different order of reality. This finding argues that familiarity with such story worlds and the ability to differentiate them from 'reality' has a significance for children's success in school that goes beyond the business of learning to read and provides a possible explanation for Wells's finding that children familiar with stories were more highly thought of by their teachers in all areas of the curriculum (Wells 1982a).

In their paper 'Stories and story time in an infant classroom' Cuff and Hustler are less concerned to produce 'findings' than to demonstrate the potential relevance of their approach for an understanding of talk in infant classrooms (Cuff and Hustler 1981). The study draws heavily on work by Sacks on the role of narrative in conversational discourse (Sacks 1970, 1974). It is particularly concerned with the second narratives generated by the children after the teacher has read them a story. The patterning of these second narratives is contrasted with that observed by Sacks in his studies of conversations of adults and of children. The principle differences observed are that in this infant classroom these second narratives are invited rather than volunteered, involve a different pattern of turn-taking and are produced with considerably less readiness, willingness, ability and indeed certainty as to the terms of the teacher's invitation, than are the second narratives in Sacks' studies.

However Cuff and Hustler fail to note other deviations from Sacks' pattern: the first narratives in the classroom under investigation were not themselves initiated with a preface or request by the teller nor was there an acceptance by the children. Indeed these classroom teacher-told story-time first narratives seem to have a different function from those in the studies of Sacks and others (Sacks op. cit. Labov and Waletzky 1966, Labov and Fanshel¹⁹⁷⁷). In these earlier studies the first narratives arise in the normal course of conversational exchange. Those studied by Cuff and Hustler, on the other hand, are events in themselves: they are the stories of story-time. They have their own *raison d'être* and are not subordinate to the discourse in which they are embedded. This is not to say that the sociolinguistic tools of interactional analysis are unsuitable for this purpose, rather that they should be used more delicately with greater consideration of the function of the interaction as a whole.

5.6

Conclusions to be drawn from these observational and interpretive studies

Taken together, these studies indicate that the experience of hearing stories read aloud can be construed in ways that the quantitative studies do not even hint at. The views of the experience from the different perspectives of the parental journal, the ethnographer, the phenomenologist and the sociolinguist, give us a multi-dimensional image of an activity which is characterised, at its richest, by the construction and manipulation of meanings in which the adult acts as an essential support for the child who is striving purposefully to make such meanings. Heath's studies suggest that

children in different social groups encounter experiences that differ in quality as well as quantity. King's study indicates that this experience conceived in such qualitative terms is highly significant for children's success in manipulating the worlds of meaning encountered in the infant classroom. Wells' work, bears this out (Wells 1982). The pioneering study by Cuff and Hustler indicates that the patterning of story-time discourse in the classroom is rather different from that of conversational discourse which includes volunteered oral narratives and those of Beveridge and Brierley, and Tizard and Hughes show that it is often more adult dominated and less enjoyable than in a 'Maintown' home.

6.

Conclusion

Work on reading readiness has yet to take any serious account of children's familiarity with, or sense-making of, the language and meanings of written texts. Perhaps the concept of readiness contains an unalterable resistance to any recognition of the shaping force of cultural experiences. Nonetheless, educationalists with more literary interests have made ambitious claims for the effects of hearing stories read aloud on children's success in their subsequent attempts at learning to read. Such claims range from the assertion in Bullock that the experience acquaints children with the rewards that await them to Wells' assertion that it familiarises them with appropriate forms of language. Nor do these claims lack empirical support. The quantitative studies indicate that the reading aloud in a leisurely manner which includes discussion of published stories that are emotionally and conceptually appropriate and are chosen by the

participants themselves, contributes to the extension of children's vocabulary and is positively associated with improvements in reading. The various case studies indicate that what is happening in such leisurely readings and in the surrounding conversational exchanges is an activity involving the construction and manipulation of meanings in forms that are highly complex and differ from ordinary conversational exchanges, even where such exchanges involve the production of narratives.

Sadly it seems that certain types of home are far more conducive to such interactions than most school classrooms, nursery or otherwise. Bissex notes that the question asking and other such active participation that characterised her son's encounters with literacy at home are regarded in school as the teacher's special domain (Bissex 1984). Such functions are so pre-empted that children often abandon them when they enter the classroom, an observation borne out as far as story reading is concerned by the findings of Cuff and Hustler, Beveridge and Brierley and Tizard and Hughes. What remains to be seen is whether it is possible to produce similarly productive interactions in the classroom for children whose homes (unlike those of Cochran-Smith's subjects) do not provide these.

It should be recognised that through these productive interactions children are initiated into ways of behaving that make reading more than just a social practice. Throughout the qualitative studies the emphasis is on the centrality of the child's own initiatives. Children are being invited to make contributions that go beyond a deterministic response to the social context, to make their own personal meanings rather than simply to key into established social meanings.

The case studies of productive home readings do not, however, focus on the linguistic forms of these narrative monologues and their surrounding conversational exchanges that go together to make up the literacy events of reading aloud to young children. Instead they focus on the semantics which the forms create, on children learning to use their own experience to illuminate the text and the text to bring new meaning to their own experience. This is not an activity which is confined to the nursery: as I have argued in Chapter 4, this kind of active participation in the construction of meaning from written texts, is seen by such literary theorists as Booth and Iser as central to the act of reading literature (Booth 1961, Iser 1974, 1978). Texts in themselves have no meaning, even for the skilled adult reader: they depend upon the experiences we bring to them, both from our own lives and from other reading. The resulting literary experience in turn affects our perception and ordering of other experiences. The case studies discussed above indicate that the very beginnings of the process of initiation into literacy can give the child learner something of the rich semantic reward that the reading of challenging literature holds for the mature reader. Instead of the decontextualised skill training of so many reading readiness programmes (Weintraub 1977) it would appear that it is precisely this kind of semantically-focussed initiation that characterises the early experiences of literacy in children who subsequently experience most success in learning to read.

But attention to literary and linguistic forms should not be dismissed as irrelevant. Applied to such early semantically focussed encounters with books, the tools of discourse analysis and systemic linguistics could increase our understanding of what is going on by

revealing the particular structural configurations that realize this semantic activity. In this way we might arrive at subtler and more valid markers than the vocabulary counts of the quantitative studies discussed earlier in this chapter. Such markers might give explanatory indications of precisely how this experience operates to assist children in the process of learning to read. Discourse analysis and systemic linguistics will certainly give us a more detailed apparatus to use when comparing the experience of children in book-sharing homes of the Maintown type with those from non-bookish homes in a book-oriented nursery class.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Choice of Methodology for the Present Investigation

1

Introduction

The review in Chapter 6 of the literature concerning children's experience of hearing stories read aloud shows clearly that different methodological approaches yield different kinds of data and different kinds of conclusions. In Section 2 of this chapter I therefore briefly summarise the argument and evidence of the preceding chapters. In Section 3 I consider, in the light of this summary, the kind of evidence that would further our understanding of this process. In Section 4, I examine and evaluate the various methodologies that might yield data appropriate to the scope and purpose of the present study and the state of knowledge in the area. In Section 5, I consider the practical details of carrying out a case study and in Section 6 I summarise the preceding discussion and draw conclusions.

2

Summary of the argument and evidence of the preceding chapters

Drawing on previous research, Chapters 1 to 5 of this thesis have argued a set of related propositions.

- (1) The learner's language plays a central role in the process of learning to read.
- (2) Although children from contrasting social classes differ markedly in the success with which they learn to read, the oral language of children from such contrasting backgrounds does not appear to differ in ways that are fundamentally important for learning to read.

- (3) This differential success in learning to read appears to be strongly associated with variations in the extent of the experience of hearing stories read aloud at home.
- (4) There is accumulating evidence that the language of written texts differs in a number of significant ways from the language of oral exchange, and that different tactics are used to construe their meanings.
- (5) Such linguistic differences concern not only features at and below the level of the sentence, but also the way in which utterances are combined into structured discourse in the two varieties.
- (6) There is also a marked divergence (in terms of such features) between the language of children's books (both those written for them to enjoy and primers designed to assist them in learning to read), and the conversational repertoire of most five year old children, regardless of social class.
- (7) Investigations of young children's experience of stories read aloud, are of two sorts. Quantitative studies show the extent of this practice varying between social classes and indicate correlations between such variations and subsequent measures of early reading. Observational and interpretive studies indicate social class differences in terms of the quality of such experience, and imply different expectations of learning to read. Such studies suggest that at its richest the experience is a highly complex and purposeful activity. But its linguistic nature remains unexplored.

My investigations are consequently directed towards the following areas:

- (i) the nature of the linguistic interaction between parent, child and author as children's books are read aloud in the normal course of events in a home where such book sharing is a dominant feature of parental interaction with young children;
- (ii) the nature of the linguistic interaction that takes place in 'story-time' in a nursery class, where book sharing is a dominant feature of adult-child interaction, but where the children attending come from homes in which this is not the case.

3

Appropriate data

Recent studies of early oral language development, based on extensive data and interpreted with considerable linguistic sophistication share certain methodological features with the less academic studies of children hearing stories read aloud examined in Chapter 6. Both imply that the most illuminating findings are likely to arise from

- (1) an examination of interactions between adult and child rather than an exclusive focus on the language of one participant or the other;
- (2) attention to the discourse structure and semantics of such interactions rather than an exclusive focus on formal features.

Taken together, the apparatus of systemic grammar and the related approach of discourse structure, are very amenable to a focus of this sort. Because of the way in which they relate function to form they

also make it possible for the investigation to examine more tangible linguistic features in a less arbitrary way than that which characterises most of the quantitative studies examined in Chapter 6. For features at the level of structural configurations can be put in a perspective that shows them as indicators of semantic patterning and of the conversational interplay between the participants in the roles they take and the commodities they exchange. This suggests, therefore, a third focus of attention:

- (3) an examination of selected features at the level of structural configurations, chosen for their productivity in indicating variations in semantic patterning and in discourse structure.

But, as Chapter 5 has argued, discourse structure in this connection, where the child's developing mastery of narrative language is at issue, must concern more than the interplay between conversational participants. It must also concern the patterning of the narrative, whether produced by one or more speakers, so another focus is indicated:

- (4) an examination of the patterning of narrative discourse of adult and child participants and of their relationship.

To reach conclusions (albeit tentative) about the kind of data that might illuminate the problem does not, of course, dispose of all methodological considerations. Broad questions remain concerning how such data are to be gathered and construed. These issues are discussed in the following section.

Evaluation of methodologies

The vast majority of reading research is based on a positivistic approach to the matter of data collection and is framed by the investigator's intention to establish general laws through the measurement of significant numbers of particular instances. Such an approach is based on assumptions about the natural (as opposed to cultural) domain in which reading lies, about the durability and applicability of the laws that can be established, and about the nature of the relationship between the observer and the phenomena under observation.

4.1

Nature versus Culture

Any consideration of how data on reading are to be gathered and construed implies a decision about whether they lie in the province of Nature or of Culture. For the social world of human beings differs from the physical world in very important ways of fundamental consequence to decisions about methodology. Once one recognises the pervasive presence of intentionality and conceptualisation in human behaviour, that events and objects with close physical similarities can differ widely in how they are perceived by different people, one recognises the limitations of objective quantifiable data.

The argument thus far points towards culture in indicating that the most illuminating data should include consideration of the patterning of semantics, discourse structure and story as well as selected features at the level of structural configurations, and should concern the interaction between skilled practitioners and

novices. All of these are cultural matters, subject to variation between social groups in ways not determined by physical considerations alone. What the child is learning in such interactions is more than the straightforward product of her learning capacities and the physical properties of the material she encounters. Heath's work demonstrates the wide cultural variation in styles of sharing books with pre-literate children (Heath op.cit.). The activity is essentially a cultural enterprise, shaped and patterned by the culture to which adult and child belong, and by the significance which that culture gives to books in general and children's books in particular.

Learning about books certainly involves processes which are physiologically based. But to fail to approach the activity as one that is essentially a cultural matter would markedly reduce the value of the data gathered and the conclusions drawn. It would imply that the process of learning about books was dependent simply on universal and ahistorical processes. Instead one should see the activity as an example of what Toulmin has in mind when he observes

Today, however, many of the most important and fascinating questions about behaviour - whether within developmental psychology, psycholinguistics, epistemology or moral philosophy - arise at the boundaries between Nature and Culture and so between the Natural Sciences and the Moral Sciences.

(Toulmin 1978 p.57)

If the process under study does indeed take place at the meeting ground between Nature and Culture, the researcher should be concerned to produce findings that have some general applicability and yet give recognition to the extent and the nature of their context dependence. As Mishler has stated, the aim of the behavioural sciences should be to produce not invariant laws of the type $y = f(x)$, but to specify the conditions under which such a relation can hold (Mishler 1979). To do

so is to make explicit the nature of the context-dependence of such a relationship. This would seem the appropriate ultimate aim of work in this area, but may not be realizable within the scope of this study.

4.3

The relation of the observer to the observed

There is another reason for turning from a strictly positivistic approach towards a more interpretive and observational stance. Positivism sees the investigator as outside and independent of the observed phenomena and thus implies a pure, objective rationality, untrammelled by the perceptions and value systems of the investigator. But, as Carini has noted, the observer of social situations is a body inside an experiential setting (Carini 1975). Both the observer and the phenomena observed are plastic and expressive. They both shape each other, for the meaning of each is revealed by the other. Thus for this reason also an unqualified positivism must be considered inappropriate in this case where the collection of data will inevitably involve exchanges of relevant meaning between observer and participants.

A case study examines an instance in action as a dynamic system and makes explicit the inevitable intrusion of the observer into the phenomena under observation, whether through the prism of phenomenology, ethnomethodology or sociolinguistics. In case study the problem under investigation is conceived of less as a matter of establishing numerical connections (which a positivistic approach produces) than a matter of understanding a whole human system, including the conceptualisation and intentionality of participants and observers, within a 'natural' or uncontrived setting.

The aim of all case study is defined by three of its British practitioners as the construction of a proper account of the complexity and embedded nature of social truths (Adelman Kenmis & Jenkins 1980). Thus case study would seem to be a serious contender as the preferred methodology for the study of a process in which conceptualisation and intentionality are so central and which Heath has shown to be deeply embedded in a wider cultural context. The approaches of phenomenology, ethnography and sociolinguistics differ in the way in which they construct and interpret the case study, but are all based on the fundamental tenet that observer and participants bring contrasting perspectives to the phenomena under study and that such contrasts are of significance. Indeed their proponents maintain that the phenomena themselves can be defined only in terms of such perspectives: they have no independent objective existence.

Phenomenology is firmly on the Culture side of the Nature/Culture border. The varying perspectives of observer and participants are used as lines of triangulation, thus giving prominence to the different meanings which a given phenomenon has for different people. It is essentially concerned to produce findings of particular rather than general significance.

Ethnography is also on the side of Culture in its attempt to dissolve the distinction between subject and context, for its aim is to explicate the means by which 'glosses' (items of cultural behaviour) are produced and perceived as ordered phenomena. As Hymes has observed, the researcher's task then becomes the relatively humble one of articulating the knowledge which is already implicit in the actions of the subjects themselves (Hymes 1972). Again, the concern is to understand the particular rather than to construct general laws.

Sociolinguistics, in most of its manifestations, is an occupant of the middle ground. Its aim is to construct rules which are in themselves general and context free, but which are contextually grounded and thus make their context dependence explicit in the manner indicated by Mishler (Mishler op.cit.). It would thus seem particularly well suited to the present study where the process under examination lies on the Nature/Culture meeting ground.

4.5

The purposes of the investigation

However, in deciding between methodologies, another consideration needs to be borne in mind. A methodology should be appropriate not only to one's conception of the phenomena under study, but also to the purposes for which one chooses to study them. The educator, whether researcher or teacher, may recognise the findings of an ethnographic approach as significant and revelatory realities, but yet feel a sense of incompleteness about them. For the educator is concerned not simply to know what is, but also to decide, on the basis of such knowledge, what ought to be.

Such decisions may be explicit or implicit. Explicit decisions in the form of written recommendations are, of course, easy to recognise. From Rousseau's Emile to the Teachers' Manual for the Breakthrough to Literacy material, the didactic voice is clear and the call for the teacher to follow a particular path is easily recognised. (Rousseau 1762, McKay et al. 1970). But the apparently descriptive writing of an educator is also imbued with such decisions about what ought to be. From Itard's account of his efforts to teach the wild boy of Aveyron, to Armstrong's account of a year in a primary classroom, the

educator's description is shaped by the intention to lead the reader to agree that decisions about courses of action must be made and that some courses of action are 'better' and 'more productive' than others (Itard 1807, Armstrong 1980). So the approaches of phenomenology and ethnography are not entirely appropriate.

Heath writes as an educator rather than an ethnographer when her description conveys that parents from Maintown homes give their children a richer experience of books than parents from the other social groups she studies (Heath 1982a 1982b). There is a strong implicit assumption in her ⁴accounts that it is desirable for all young children to have a similarly rich experience of books at home. Indeed one of her studies is concerned to document her own attempt at intervention in the home life of a young mother and her children from a social group not dissimilar to Trackton (Heath 1983).

My concern in undertaking this investigation is the concern of an educator who wishes to understand better what is going on when pre-school children engage in a 'rich' experience of books, in order that something of this sort might be made more widely available and that learning to read might become a more significant and successful part of the school experience of children than tends to be the case at present. The methodology chosen must therefore allow for the comparison between different ways of constructing and construing the activity of reading aloud to young children in terms of their suitability as preparation for learning to read. For this reason the approaches of phenomenology and ethnography are inadequate in that they preclude such value judgements. Sociolinguistics, on the other hand, allows for the possibility of such comparisons.

The place of muted positivism and of case study in educational and psycholinguistic research

Precisely because education in a complex modern society involves deciding on alternative courses of action, the positivistic approaches of experimentation and large scale survey should not be completely outlawed: they are essential if educational policies are to be formulated and followed. But the authors of such studies should recognise and make explicit their limitations. The complexity of the phenomena which they record, manipulate and measure cannot be fully controlled but must be taken into account if the findings are to have any validity. Caveats must be made concerning the influence of the perceptions both of the observer and the observed on the phenomena under study. The disturbing effect of the intrusion of an observer into the situation must be recognised. Context dependence and cultural variation of findings manifesting themselves in ways not originally conceived of in the research design, must nonetheless be allowed for as a clear possibility.

The decision as to whether to adopt a case study approach or one of muted positivism must thus depend in large measure on the state of knowledge in the field under investigation. Chapter 6 has shown that quantitative approaches to children's experience of hearing stories read aloud have yet to produce data that can be regarded as anything other than superficial. These quantitative studies have in the main drawn neither on appropriate literary and linguistic theory, nor on the interpretive and evaluative studies case studies of different sorts, considered in the same chapter. And these case studies are not yet strong enough to support useful quantitative investigation. They

have their own limitations in that, except for the work of Snow, Heath and Cochran-Smith, they tend to be somewhat naive in their theoretical assumptions. Except for Snow they are tantalisingly vague about the linguistic transactions through which children encounter the stories that are read to them. Thus it would seem that what would be useful at this point is a case study approach with a greater degree of theoretical sophistication particularly in the area of linguistics.

4.7

The role of theory in case study

Case studies are not atheoretical, since every act of directing attention, selecting from or ordering data, implies some kind of theory. Such acts are essential if the researcher's findings are not to be quite incoherent. So to be entirely open-minded is not only impossible, but also undesirable. Instead, as L Smith stresses, the onus is on the researcher to be aware of the theoretical frameworks she takes into the situation under study and to communicate her awareness (L Smith 1980).

The theory presented in Chapters 1, 3 and 4, supported by the empirical evidence in Chapters 2 and 5, justifies an investigation into the topic under study. The theory in Chapter 3 can also usefully guide an analysis of the data rising from such an investigation, permitting one to trace the web of linguistic connections made by the participants between oral language and written narrative as the child is initiated into the process of construing a written story. The theory in Chapter 4 offers further means of analysing these interactions and the narrative constructed through them.

However the scope of such a study as this is limited. Some

aspects or dimensions will inevitably be treated more fully than others and, however extensive the analysis, the study will carry the limitations of all case studies. Such limitations can only be overcome by subsequent work of wider scopes of the cautiously positivistic type outlined earlier.

4.8

Conclusions concerning a suitable methodological approach for the present study

In the area under study there is no absence of relevant theory. But the quantitative work which exists reveals little of interest since it is insufficiently guarded in its positivistic stance and inadequately informed by what theory and existing case studies have indicated to be significant, and these, in any case are limited in their findings. At this point it seems, therefore, that a suitably conceived case study, revealing something of the contextually bound internal logic of the phenomena, particularly if guided by the approach and conceptual framework of sociolinguistics, could perform a useful service in advancing our understanding in this area. It might lead to fruitful new ways of conceiving of the phenomena and could act as a fore-runner to later more broadly based studies. But since the phenomena under study include fictional narratives, structuralist poetics may provide a useful supplementary analytical tool.

A case study which consciously attempts to make use of the theoretical frameworks of systemic grammar and discourse analysis that have been so fruitful in other investigations of children's language development, should usefully complement the theoretical and empirical work on reading examined in Chapter 1 and the studies on the

experience of being read aloud to in Chapter 6. In drawing also on structuralist poetics it should illumine features and processes previously unexamined in studies of young children's initiation into literacy.

5

Carrying out a case study

Tactical considerations remain to be decided. These concern the definition of the case, the mode of observation and the recording, selection and use of data. Decisions on these matters are not trivial: inappropriate choices could weaken the validity of the findings.

I have not included in this section any explicit reference to the particular decisions made concerning the conduct of the two case studies in this investigation. This is because the cases in question are sufficiently different to necessitate separate planning and documentation. Yet the same issues underlie both. It therefore seems that the most economical form of presentation would be first to consider these issues in general, then in the following chapter to report on the planning and conduct of the particular case studies in turn.

5.1

The definition of the case

In a reflective article on the problems and possibilities of case study, Adelman, Kenmis and Jenkins stress the importance of treating the boundaries of the case and the issues it raises as problematic matters that cannot be safely predicted (Adelman, Kenmis and Jenkins

1980). To have a clear idea beforehand of what is and what is not the case implies that the structure of the case is known and understood before it is investigated and thus denies the very argument which gives case study its major justification. This means that the researcher should enter the field not without any definition of what she wants to study, but with a definition that is cautious, one that is qualified by an awareness that closer acquaintance with the phenomena might well lead to a widening, narrowing or shifting or observational focus.

5.2

The collection of data by personal observation and interview

5.2.1

The advantages and disadvantages of personal observation

Writers on case study tend to assume that personal observation is necessary to the conduct of the investigation. Stake puts it more cautiously than most when he states that it is likely that data will be gathered, at least in part, by personal observation (Stake 1980). But even in case study, this is not a foregone conclusion: the decision on first-hand observation needs to be considered in the light of such issues as the degree of intimacy and fragility in the situation under observation, the apparent clarity of the case's boundaries and the importance of information concerning physical context of situation.

5.2.2

Types of personal observation

Where the researcher has decided on personal observation the intrusiveness of that observation cannot be lightly dismissed. Citing Carini, I argued in Section 4 that the presence of the observer inevitably has an effect on the phenomena being observed where these involve human beings engaged in action. The observer who aims for invisibility is likely only to delude herself, since the participants in the situation under observation will insist on developing their own ideas of what is going on, of how the investigator construes their activities and of how she evaluates them as practitioners. Such perceptions might well have an intrusive effect on the participants' behaviour, leading them to act in ways that would otherwise be unlikely. Thus an investigator who aims for a low profile could well produce findings more distorted (and therefore less valid) than those of a participant observer.

On the other hand, the participant observer who is in some way involved in the normal web of activities in the situation under investigation is less likely to cause the participants to question the normality of what they are engaged in since her actions contribute in an expected way to what is going on and thus act as a validation for its normality.

And yet to take up an exclusively participatory role would invalidate the whole enterprise since it would preclude the necessary focussed attention on the actions of the participants or on other phenomena that fall within the observer's definition of the case.

When an investigator has decided on personal observation as a mode of investigation, she should proceed with care. Participant observation seems more fruitful than low profile observation because

it will reveal more of the meaning systems governing the acts observed, and its effect is likely to be less disturbing and can be more easily controlled, monitored and taken into account. But the participation should not crowd out the observation.

5.2.3

Field notes

As Stierer has observed, the field notes of an observer are the outcome of a highly selective and interpretive process which is, where classroom observation is concerned, largely shaped by the observer's prior knowledge of teachers and pupils (Stierer 1983). Clearly a case study approach is not compatible with defining field study notes as marks on a previously organised observation grid. Nevertheless what the observer selects as worthy of note is heavily dependent on the complex interplay between values, theories, first hand experience and second hand experience of what goes on in the type of situation under study. The researcher may be aware of only part of this perceptual apparatus, probably the part that is sanctioned as academic. The researcher's job is then to make the interplay between this perceptual apparatus and the phenomena around her as rich as possible. To do this she must not be afraid to use her own intuition about the intentions and meanings of those whose actions she is studying, but should be aware when she is doing so and should seek where possible to validate these intuitions by reference to other people's opinions.

5.2.4

The use of interviews

Interviews with adult participants can usefully inform such

observational activities in revealing more about the participants' meaning systems. These are more likely to be fruitful where there is atmosphere of friendliness, respect and shared concerns, and where the investigator communicates her desire to understand, rather than to pass judgement. Involvement in the activities under study through participant observation can make the creation of such an atmosphere considerably easier. Interviews should be structured so that they are neither too heavily directed and thus restricted by the interviewers' preconceptions, nor too undirected and thus in danger of degenerating into irrelevant chat.

5.2.5

Summary

Personal observation is clearly a delicate matter. As the investigator tries to bring an informed subjectivity to bear on the physical and mental phenomena under consideration, she runs the risk of distorting them beyond recognition either by causing the participants to change their behaviour, or by construing them inappropriately. There is no easy answer: to aim for objectivity is to run aground on the inadequacies of a positivistic approach in dealing with cultural phenomena, and to rely on the participants to validate one's interpretation (a tactic which is in any case not completely open to those studying small children) is to deny the possibility that what the participant does and what she would like to believe she does, may well be very different.

5.3

Recording data by mechanical means

The use of the tape recorder is, of course, well established in investigations into children's language. But tape recording is not unproblematic.

In an article on the recording of children's conversations at home and at nursery school, Tizard notes that there is no consensus on how such data should be collected and little published discussion of the technological and methodological problems involved (Tizard 1979).

Tape recording may appear to eliminate many of the problems of personal observation and thus permit a more objective record. But this impression is illusory: the possibility of intrusion remains, appeals to the researcher's intuition cannot be avoided and processes of selection involving value judgements are inevitably brought into play.

Firstly decisions have to be made concerning what is recorded: whether this should include visual data or only sound data, whether it should focus on moving individuals or static locations, how long the recordings should be and at what time of day. Secondly decisions have to be made concerning what is to be transcribed and what omitted from a transcription and how the information is to be laid out on the page. I will consider these matters in turn.

5.3.1

The comparative advantages of audiotape and videotape

A videotape obviously provides the investigation with information on non-linguistic behaviour that can usefully supplement and in certain cases disambiguate an audio recording. In a complex situation

where many participants are involved, the information from a videotape is likely to be more comprehensive than is direct personal observation and the investigator will find that she can see new points of apparent relevance on each re-run of the videotape. The information from an audiotape is, of course, more limited. But a decision between the two forms of recording needs to take into account not only the quantity of information they will provide, but also the extent to which the process of recording is likely to distort the phenomena under observation. An audiotape recorder, whether operated with a radio microphone or not, is a much less intrusive instrument. A videocamera with its attendant lights and maybe even operators, is likely to transform the situation into a performance. These losses and gains must be balanced in the light of the nature of the information sought, the nature of the situation under examination and the likely reactions of the participants is involved.

5.3.2

Types of audio-recording equipment

If the investigator decides on audio-recording, the next decision is between recorders with and without radio microphones. Here the crucial factor is whether the investigator is more interested in individuals moving through space on the one hand, or larger numbers in particular locations on the other. Radio microphones are less well suited than multi-directional fixed microphones to recording conversations with a number of participants in a particular location.

5.3.3

The duration and timing of recordings

The duration of recordings should be decided after taking into account the critical features of the phenomena under study and the framework in which they are to be interpreted. Thus if linguistic forms at or below the level of the sentence are at issue, it makes sense to take short samples. But if what is being studied is a form of extended discourse such as the narrative, then the duration of each recording needs to be long enough to contain a complete unit of structured discourse.

The timing of recordings must also differ according to the investigator's conception of the subject matter. If this concerns the language produced in a situation that occurs at a regular time each day it makes sense to make recordings not at random, nor at predetermined arbitrary times, but at the times when that activity is in operation, and only then.

5.3.4

Transcription

Transcription presents many problems, the first of which is verbal accuracy. Conversation of any sort is notoriously hard to transcribe accurately. Conversations with young children are harder to transcribe than most, for reasons involving the imperfect mastery of phonology, immature syntax, idiosyncratic meanings and heavy dependence on shared frames of reference. Wells writes that there can never be any certainty about what has been said, only well-motivated guesses corroborated by subsequent contributions to the conversation (Wells 1982b). And of course these subsequent contributions may be

misleading. They may be based on participants' misunderstandings of one another which are particularly frequent where young children are involved, and particularly likely to go uncorrected. In talking of the transcription of home conversations, Wells writes that this is best achieved by a collaboration between mother and transcriber, but that nonetheless

the interpretation of a child's utterance must
rely quite heavily on intuition derived from experience
(Wells 1982b p.31)

The other problems of transcription concern what is to be represented (other than the words spoken) and how it is all to be set out. Ochs stresses the importance of producing a transcript that reflects research goals and that this involves bringing out into the open decisions that are often made unconsciously or intuitively (Ochs 1979). The danger she emphasises is that such unconscious decisions reflect distorting assumptions and lead on to unwarranted inferences on the part of the reader. Selectivity is to be encouraged, but it should not be random or implicit. Ochs makes specific recommendations concerning both the features to be noted and the form of setting these down.

She recommends that each participant should be assigned on a vertical column, so that the reader does not make the unwarranted inference that a particular utterance is contingent in any way on the preceding utterance by another speaker. Note should be made of the presence or absence and length of pauses within and between utterances and the overlap of utterances should also be noted since such pauses, hesitations and overlaps are a rich source of information about what the child finds problematic, the extent to which she is aware of such problems and any attempts to repair errors or omissions.

To avoid excessive verbal foregrounding, any transcription should where possible and where the conversation is rooted in the here and now, include a detailed recording of accompanying gestures, body orientation and line of gaze.

Ochs also recommends that the researcher should consider carefully whether to use standard or phonetic orthography, since the choice of standard orthography, she argues, is based on the assumption that language is used to express ideas, and so it may mask a child's sound play.

Certainly Ochs is right that these issues should be decided in the light of the particular research goals. But perhaps these goals are rather more varied than she recognises. Her categorical recommendations are perhaps less uniformly useful than she claims. To separate consecutive utterances by different speakers across the page can make it hard for the reader to give full recognition to contingencies that do exist. And the more participants involved, the more distracting and ultimately impracticable column separation can become. Information on physical action is likely to be another cause of distraction if the researchers' focus is on the movement towards linguistic self-sufficiency.

What should be remembered is that decisions which seem mere technical details can have a marked effect on the way in which the reader construes the language that is transcribed.

5.4

The unofficial record

Stierer's term 'unofficial record' refers to the investigator's awareness and conceptualisation of phenomena outside her primary focus

of attention (Stierer 1983). It is made up of the vital interpretive information that enables the investigator to select, shape, evaluate and ultimately to provide the explanatory descriptions and emergent understandings that make a case study. The unofficial record closely resembles the pattern of shared experiences and understandings which enables parents to interpret the otherwise obscure utterances of their children. Both parent and investigator draw heavily on intuition. The more sense the investigator is to make of her data, the more she needs to use intuition to project herself into the experiences, understandings and value systems of the participants, just as Wells has shown the enabling parent to do (Wells 1982b).

5.5

The selection and use of data as evidence

In an ~~recent~~ article on the use of linguistic data in educational research, Stubbs emphasises the danger of unprincipled selection from the data which the researcher has brought back from the field (Stubbs 1981). He states that the researcher makes extracts from transcripts and field notes for reasons which are not always made explicit and then engages in a further act of apparently arbitrary selection by choosing certain linguistic features for particular attention. The incidence and patterning of these features and particular quoted extracts are then treated as evidence for educational statements, often without any explicit account of how such extracts or patterns support the claims made. Readers are expected to recognise quoted exchanges as unproblematic instances of such non-linguistic categories as particular styles of learning or teaching.

Stubbs is principally concerned with the dangers of simplistic

connections thrown across the ~~chasm~~^{territory} between linguistic data and educational judgement. Such connections do not incorporate an understanding of the terrain or the forces at work in it, since the investigators fail to consider linguistic data in the light of linguistic or sociolinguistic structures in which they are terms. One might add that it also represents a failure to consider the particular case as having its own particular dynamics.

Certainly when making selections from data and subsequently drawing conclusions, it is important for the researcher to aim to be as explicit as possible about the reasoning on which such choices and conclusions depend. Wherever relevant, such reasoning should draw on the findings of earlier theoretical and empirical work. But the reasoning behind such selections and conclusions must also involve heavy use of the unofficial record if it is not to lose sight of the fact that language is meaningful behaviour. What is important is that the investigator should be aware of the source of her interpretive strategies and should recognise that they might be called into question. In order to validate her own intuitions she must accordingly supply her reader with the kind of information that appeared to contribute to their making. And so relevant details about the 'atmosphere' of the situation should be openly communicated.

I have argued that the spirit of case study research with the stress it places on the understanding of phenomena, militates against the kind of unprincipled use of data to which Stubbs objects. Positivism is a more dangerous path from this point of view.

Conclusions concerning the practical implementation of a case study approach

Subjectivity cannot be excluded from a study of this sort. It is involved in the definition of the case, in the closely allied issue of deciding what to record, in the processes of making a personal record or transcribing a mechanical one and in the selection and use of data. It cannot be avoided. But it should be an informed, cautious and self-conscious subjectivity that does not claim to be something else, but admits that other choices and interpretations might be valid.

It might seem that judgements based on such subjectivity would be in conflict with those based on the application of a theoretical framework such as systemic linguistics. But what should be stressed is that a framework of this sort, far from hampering and constraining the operation of a case study actually provides a very useful set of tools that will help the case study worker to achieve her aims of understanding the case and making judgements about it. For systemic linguistics is founded on a recognition of language as meaningful intentional behaviour of a highly complex sort and of the complexity of the pattern of connections between function and form that permits an infinite variety of meanings to be realized. Thus the principled application of systemic linguistics can reveal something of the range of formal options and of the meaning options available to a speaker or community of speakers, and makes possible the comparison of resources between individuals and between communities. The procedures of case study can also contribute to carrying out systemic analysis since, at any level other than structural configurations, the analyst is heavily dependent on familiarity with the unstated conventions of the

community under study concerning how words and utterances are construed in particular situations.

6

Summary and conclusions

I concluded in Section 3 that the most illuminating findings to be sought in the area under investigation would concern the linguistic interactions between child and caretaking adult. Those would include attention to discourse structure and semantics, characterised by reference to the investigator's inferences about the participants' intentions as well as to formal features.

Although a strictly positivistic approach would be inappropriate to deal with matters that are fundamentally cultural, nevertheless an area such as this can be illuminated by a theoretical approach, by investigation based on a cautious and muted positivism, or by case study. All these approaches could contribute usefully to the advancement of understanding. However, at the present time, in the light of the findings discussed in Chapter 6, it would appear that a case study approach is preferable since it is more likely than others to yield the kind of semantic and interactive information identified as desirable. I have chosen to carry out such a study within a framework of sociolinguistics rather than phenomenology or ethnography since this permits the foregrounding of the comparative and evaluative dimension that is necessary to an educational investigation. I have also chosen to draw on structuralist poetics to illumine the narratives involved.

However carrying out a case study is a delicate matter. Certain things are foreseeable: the investigator will need to rely on her own

intuition at many stages in the processes of observing, recording, interpreting and evaluating, but this intuition should be, as far as possible, validated by participants and made available to the reader for further validation. Furthermore it should be tempered by what the researcher is aware of having read and experienced elsewhere, and should be organised in a framework that relies not solely on one individual's subjectivity but on the principled application of appropriate theoretical systems. Intuition is necessary if the investigator is to disambiguate some pieces of data, to construe others or to conceptualise some of the articulating connections between them. But this intuition should operate within the discipline of a theoretical framework, provided in this investigation principally by sociolinguistics.

The investigator's job is not easy. What is needed here is a combination of empathy and detachment. Empathy is necessary if the investigator is to understand the significance and the dynamics of the participants' actions. Detachment is also necessary for the educational investigator whose job is not solely to describe what is in terms that make it understandable, but also to describe it in evaluative terms that, implicitly or explicitly set what is, beside what could be and thus make it more possible for the practitioner to make more informed choices about courses of action.

CHAPTER EIGHT

How the Field Work was Carried Out and Recorded

My report on how the field work was planned, prepared and carried out is divided into two sections, the first of which relates to the home study and the second to the school study.

1

The home study

1.1

The selection of cases

Initially I planned to carry out two case studies of children's bed-time story sessions at home, but subsequently eliminated one of these from the investigation for reasons I give when I discuss the 'unofficial record'. The two families were selected because each had a child of three years old, and in each case at least one parent particularly enjoyed reading to the child, was eager to co-operate in an investigation of this sort and seemed sufficiently self-confident not to be disconcerted by the process.

1.2

The type of observation

I decided to proceed not by personal observation, but by mechanical recording supplemented by unstructured interviews with the parents concerned. My decision on this was governed by the following considerations. Firstly there was the matter of distorting intrusion. As Newson and Newson have observed, young children's bedtimes are very intimate and highly charged situations, often involving private ritual

words and actions as the parent settles the child for sleep (Newson and Newson 1968). As is the case in very many middle-class families, it is precisely this intimate situation that provides the context for regular extended story readings for these two families. In both homes the sibling of the three year old was the only person allowed to join the parent and child for the bed-time story and, whether the sibling was older or younger, he or she was expected to play a minor role.

The highly charged intimacy of these story readings is thus a fragile and delicate matter. I calculated that it would have been irretrievably harmed by the physical presence of an investigator behaving in ways that would inevitably have excited comment from the child, made the parent self-conscious and prevented both from co-operating in using a shared experience of books to round off the day in the way they were accustomed to.

It also seemed that such official data as I could get only from personal observation or from the even more intrusive videotape (the participants' physical attitudes, their orientation and distance with respect to the book, the physical referents for their deictic utterances) were not of central concern to the present investigation. I was interested to know only about the books that were read and the verbal interactions between the participants, which constituted these readings.

So I decided on mechanical recording on audiotape, supplemented by a parental record of the titles of stories read to the child. I considered that relatively unstructured interviews with the parents in their homes would serve the dual function of adding to these 'official' data and providing 'unofficial' data that would appropriately supplement the expectations and interpretive frameworks

I brought to the case and so assist me in construing what was happening in these story readings.

Once I had decided on audiotape recording, the next decision concerned the type of microphone and the duration and timing of recordings. Since my concern was with the kind of language produced in a particular situation (the bed-time story), I chose a recorder with a built-in microphone which was switched on by the parent at the beginning of each recorded story-reading session. These recordings were made at approximately monthly intervals over a period of twelve months. The parents were interviewed informally every three months over the same period.

1.3

Transcription

The accuracy of my transcription is, of course, not guaranteed. However, the technical quality of the home recordings is good enough to allow transcription to proceed smoothly with few obvious ambiguities or indecipherable stretches. Those that I did come across I attempted to resolve firstly by repeated playings of the problematic stretch, including a few seconds of the preceding stretch already satisfactorily transcribed, thus providing suitable conditions, I hoped, for the appropriate use of my own intuitive judgement. Where this failed I tried to appeal to the parents to use their interpretive procedures, but unfortunately, because of an unavoidable time lapse between recording and transcription, this process was less informative than I had hoped it would be.

Because my concerns are different from hers, these sound tapes are not transcribed on the lines laid down by Ochs (1979). I have not

wished nor been able to include information about physical context, gesture or body orientation. Nor have I spread the various participants' contributions across the page, preferring instead to follow something closer to the dramatic convention to which Ochs takes exception. The speech of mother and child is represented on the left of the page, in chronologically sequential order, with braces enclosing overlapping or simultaneous speech. On the right of the page I have set out the printed text they are looking at, together with some information about the picture. My main reason for choosing this arrangement is that the dramatic convention permits a clearer visual indication of overlapping or simultaneous speech. In this investigation, this is an important consideration since overlapping speech involves interruption, an attempt to disrupt the conversational pattern. The length of overlap is the product of a conflict between the first speaker's determination to stick to one pattern and the second speaker's determination to vary this. In a study of children's initiation into the language of narratives, I held such information to be a more relevant consideration than the danger of investing sequences of utterances by different speakers with an unwarranted semantic contingency.

My reason for including the printed text on the right side of the page was to allow the reader to detect the relationship of the spoken words to the printed words in front of the speakers and thus the number, extent and nature of departures from this printed text, departures which might not be apparent from looking at the spoken words alone. I have separated the speech of mother and child into utterances, and numbered these for ease of reference. I use the term utterance to mean either a conversational turn (where it cannot be

divided into smaller units according to the criteria set out below) or a part of a conversational turn set off from others within that turn.

In all their story readings Anna and her mother make conventional use of intonation to divide what they say into relatively clear cut groupings of words with a distinctive patterning of pitch and stress and sometimes in addition clear pauses between groups. This makes the identification of smaller units within extensive monologues a relatively straightforward matter and certainly less problematic than is usually found to be the case in the transcription of adult conversation (Crystal and Davy 1969). However, as I will show in the next chapter when I analyse these utterances at the level of structural configurations, not all of these units (even where they are intonationally complete) can be classed as sentences, even of the minor type.

I am aware that in using a term such as 'intonationally complete' without explanation and detailed evidence of a kind that would be extremely time-consuming, I am relying on my own intuition, and appealing to the intuition of the reader. But the division of these transcripts into units of this sort is a necessary preliminary for close and systematic analysis. Dividing the texts into utterances and numbering them has made the material amenable to finer classification. It does not appear to have distorted it in any way relevant to the concerns of this thesis.

1.4

The unofficial record

In the case of this home study it is very probable that the intuitions I used to help me transcribe unclear stretches of tape as

well as those that informed my interpretations of the verbal transactions taking place in the children's bedrooms, were strongly guided by conscious and unconscious impressions gained from my visits to the families and from my own experiences - as child, sister and mother - of family life with young children. In the case of the second child in the home study (Michael) I found that this unofficial record became too intrusive and diverted me from the proper focus of the study. His family was, quite simply, too well known and too close to me. I had known his parents as close friends for some ten years and had looked after his sister on the day he was born. I found it impossible to listen to the tapes of his parents reading to him without wondering why his mother was so tired, to what extent his apparent delight in violence resulted from his early experience in a creche, or what I should give him for his next birthday. In a sense it seemed a betrayal of our friendship to make any attempt to resist such thoughts and so I decided it would not be fruitful to continue to include him in the study.

The other child was not known to me personally. I met her mother when she responded to an appeal I addressed to members of the local Children's Book Group, and the ensuing relationship was much easier to focus onto appropriate concerns. Our conversation has principally concerned children and books and in particular her daughter Anna's relationship with books. This conversation and my own relevant personal experiences have most usefully helped me to construe what is going on in the bed-time story sessions.

The school study

2.1

The selection and definition of the case

It seemed fruitless to study a teacher with little commitment to or apparent skill in reading aloud to young children: educational literature abounds with accounts of inadequate teaching which do little to further our understanding of what good teaching might be. So I resolved to study a teacher who was enthusiastic and apparently skilful and thus would provide an appropriate counterpart to the parent in the home study. I also decided to choose a teacher whose pupils did not come from book-oriented homes, so that their school experience constituted their chief contact with books, since my intention was in part to explore whether the school could provide for such children an experience similar to that provided by the 'mainstream' parent in the book-oriented home.

My criterion for deciding whether the teaching was skilful was crude: after six months or so in school, did the children from homes not oriented towards books, appear interested in the stories read to them and the books out of which these came? Through following up personal contacts I identified a teacher for whom a positive answer to this question was clearly justified. Mrs G invited me into her classroom where the vast majority of children came from such homes and yet displayed a high level of interest and involvement in books. Mrs G was already known to me, partly through professional contacts (she had undertaken a Diploma course in language development and the teaching of reading taught by colleagues of mine) and partly through

personal contact (her husband ran a shop near my home). We knew each other's children and were interested in their problems and successes, but this knowledge served as a validating background for our shared professional interest in helping children towards an active competence in making sense of printed stories.

Mrs G's class was one of two nursery classes attached to a large First School (3-8 years) serving an arid and sprawling Local Authority housing estate on the outskirts of a southern coastal town. In the past many 'problem' families had been collected on this particular estate and because of the social, physical and economic conditions it was officially designated by the DES as a Social Priority Area. The places given in the school's nursery classes were nearly all on the recommendation of the Local Authority Social Services Department because the children were judged to be in need of some caring and stimulating experience away from a stressful home. One child in the class studied was the son of another teacher in the school, but the stability of this child's home and the richness of his home experience of books were in marked contrast to the experience of the other children. All the children seemed adequately cared for physically, but with the exception of the child mentioned above, there was very little indication that any had been given any pleasurable experience of books at home before they had entered the nursery class, or indeed, that any attempt had been made to expose them to books. Thus they seemed highly suitable for my study.

I spent one morning a week with this class (most of whom attended for the morning only) over one school year. When I first entered the class, my operational definition of the case was in terms of the teacher's induction of children into the language of stories. But my

sense of what that meant, of the kinds of activities and understandings involved and of what it excluded that was also worthy of consideration, underwent considerable change in the course of the investigation, as I moved towards a more complex definition of the case. Consequently the focus of my attention in the classroom changed and I came to see the necessity of supplementing classroom data with information about the children's experience of books at home.

2.2

The type of observation

In the school study I adopted a procedure quite different from the one I used in the home study, namely personal observation of a participant kind. I decided on different approaches for the two studies because of the fundamental differences in situation that were involved. The home situation was simpler in that it involved a few easily identified participants, whereas in the classroom the cast was much larger and more subject to change. If I had applied a uniform methodology in the two situations it would have resulted in inconsistent data. Sound recording as the sole means of data collection in both situations would probably have produced many useful data from the home, but a high proportion of unattributable and unintelligible speech from the more complex situation in the nursery classroom.

In the particular nursery classroom that I was studying, visiting adults were the norm rather than the exception. Mothers were encouraged to come in and help on a regular basis, taking groups for cooking and sewing in particular. Fifth year pupils from a nearby secondary school came regularly to help the teacher and to learn about

small children. For two periods of three months each, a young person worked under the teacher's direction, as part of the work experience scheme in the Youth Opportunities Programme. The Head Teacher and Local Education Authority Nursery Adviser were less frequent visitors. Neither the teacher nor Mrs P the nursery Assistant, nor the children appeared to regard yet one more adult in the classroom as an intrusion.

But they did all have their expectations of what I should do and these clearly pointed me towards a participatory role, rather than a low profile. Mrs G expected me to spend at least part of my time as a second teacher in the classroom, working with small groups of children in story-related activities of my own choosing and devising, as well as carrying out my own observations. She and Mrs P expected me to help also in the day to day business of looking after small children: taking them to the toilet, helping them on with their outdoor clothes at playtime and comforting them when they were distressed. The children also clearly expected this kind of behaviour of me.

Although in principal aware of the value of participant observation, initially I took part in such activities largely because it was expected of me and therefore because not to do so might well prejudice my welcome in the classroom and the necessary co-operation of teacher, assistant and children in my investigations. Gradually I came to see that this participation revealed to me something of the patterns of meaning and expectation of the teacher, assistant and children that might have been harder to learn through a more detached approach.

At the beginning of my observation, my intention was to focus chiefly on the teacher's story reading sessions as, following much of

the literature discussed in Chapter 6, I saw these as providing the forum for the children's initiation into the language of books. So my early field notes are concerned almost exclusively with documenting these sessions: identifying child speakers, noting children's posture and gaze where this seemed to indicate attention and distraction and adding other information that might disambiguate a problematic utterance or assist in its interpretation.

However the data that I managed to glean through this process of observation, recording and transcription often seemed tantalisingly sparse. When a story appeared to go well, in the sense that the children showed high levels of interest during the telling and satisfaction at the end, their spoken contributions often seemed slight and unrevealing of the private, internal mental processes in which they were apparently engaged. Whereas the child studied at home made extensive verbal contributions to the story telling, the children at school tended towards a relatively silent participation. This was less true of some than of others, which was both a reward and a hindrance, in that the comparatively voluble contribution of certain children provided a relatively rich source of information about their developing mastery of the language of books and narrative structure. But the child who was most voluble of all, and who initially dominated all the class story sessions as he dominated most classroom activities, was Andrew, coded on my transcripts as N, the already mentioned son of another teacher at the school, and well-initiated into stories by his family. Thus although his extensive contributions were informative, they did not provide the kind of information I wanted. Andrew could not show me how a child with slim experience of books at home could encounter and become familiar with this new kind

of discourse in the setting of a nursery classroom.

Andrew left the class in the spring term when his family moved to another part of the country and thus removed one source of my dissatisfaction about the information I could glean from the sessions in which Mrs G read aloud to the class. My attitude to these data was changed also by my analysis of them. I came to see that the apparently slight contributions of the other children when subjected to close and systematic analysis, yielded interesting indications of growth in their familiarity with the language of books and understanding of the meanings that might be made from them.

However in September and October the fruitfulness of my recording and observation of Mrs G's story reading sessions was less apparent. So, in order to supplement these seemingly sparse data, I decided to record the children attempting to tell a story previously read to the class by Mrs G, while they held the book in front of them.

Although well aware that productive performance could not indicate the full extent of receptive competence, I thought that it might provide some relevant information. Throughout the year I tried to capture as many spontaneous stories as I could arising in the course of children's undirected activity with books during free play sessions but the process was difficult. Initially the principal difficulty was that very little such story telling appeared to be going on. The secondary and more technical difficulty was that background noise and the children's quicksilver changes of activity, posture and place made tape-recorded eavesdropping impracticable. Personal eaves-dropping was more fruitful, so I sat, notebook and pen in hand, with my eyes fixed on another part of the room, scribbling down what I could of what was going on. But a full record was often impossible as the

children's voices dropped or the speakers rattled on too fast for my pen. So I decided to intervene in the situation in order to elicit this kind of activity in circumstances where it could be more accurately recorded and more fully documented.

Aware that in various studies children as young as two years old had produced stories in response to a researcher's request, I began by handing children in turn books that had been recently read to the class by Mrs G and asking them to tell me the story (Pitcher and Prelinger 1963, Sacks 1972, Paley 1981). These children, however, greeted this request as if it were bizarre to the point of unreasonability and made no attempt to comply. I thought I might make the task seem less unacceptable to them by introducing puppets who liked telling and hearing stories. So, after consulting various people including Margaret Donaldson, on my third visit to the classroom I took in two hand puppets, an orange velvet elephant and a black furry cat whom I introduced as Bill and Charlie. These puppets held an immediate and lasting attraction for the children. I arranged things so that Bill was always asleep when Mrs G read the story to the class but Charlie was keen to listen and there was strong competition for the privilege of looking after him at story time. At some point afterwards I would suggest that someone might like to help Charlie tell the story to Bill who had unfortunately missed it. I chose two or three of those who volunteered and we went off into a separate room with the book recently read and any other they thought Bill might be interested to hear.

Presented in this way story-telling became very attractive to the children even if they had very little idea of how to go about it. It also became an activity in which I was seen to have a legitimate

interest. Charlie and Bill were welcomed eagerly on my weekly visits and ensured that I was welcomed as their guardian. The children seemed to take pleasure in the expedition to the separate room as this meant going upstairs, along a corridor with a lively mural made by some older children, past the Head Teacher's room and into an Aladdin's cave, a large and comfortable room that was a repository of strange and fascinating mathematical equipment, and was furnished with mats and cushions and decorated with exciting pictures made by older children.

I have given a fairly full if generalised description of these story telling sessions because they seemed to develop a significance for the children which I had neither intended nor foreseen. Although only two or three children would set off each week with Bill, Charlie, the tape recorder, books and me for the Maths Resource Room, the expedition and the ritual of sitting down with Charlie and a book in front of the tape recorder, quickly became part of the predictable peculiarity of school for these children and an integral and quite important part of their experience of books. In short, I came to see that my attempts to tap the children's learning in this area actually resulted in what might have been a considerable modification of that learning.

I also came to see, particularly through these sessions, that what the children were learning could not be adequately summarised by the term "the language of books", unless that term were considerably widened and even then it might prove inadequate. For many of their story time interjections, much of the help they gave Charlie and many of their undirected story constructions in the classroom revealed more of their growing mastery of the sequence of events and the narrative

patterning in stories than it did of their familiarity with particular lexis, syntactical structures or verbal patterning over longer stretches. Although these activities revealed them venturing into new territory in terms of situation and semantics, as I watched them compete for Mrs G's story time chair, it seemed to me that much of what they were learning was as much concerned with the role of the story teller than with the language of the story. Many children put on a special tone of voice and a rather fussy and bossy manner as they settled themselves on the chair clutching a pile of books on the lap and instructing an often imaginary audience to sit on their bottoms as it was story time.

Consequently my account of my findings takes the form of a retrospective interpretation of changing data. If I were now to embark on a similar study I would not go about it in exactly the same way. I would be both more circumspect and more aware of possible sources of relevant information. For in the course of carrying out this study I learnt that coming to know books is a richer and more complex matter than I initially admitted. It certainly involves learning of new linguistic forms, new structural configurations, but it also involves new functions, new situations with new roles and, perhaps most important of all, new kinds of meanings.

I also became aware of the complex ways in which a teacher and a school can modify children's experience of books indirectly. During the school year the children in the nursery class were increasingly involved in buying books from the school bookshop with money collected each morning and recorded on the child's bookshop card by Mrs G. Parents, like the other adults in the classroom, were asked to read stories to small groups and both of these activities seemed to

contribute to a sharp increase in the children's experience of stories at home.

It is within this context of my own changing understanding that I made the decisions concerning the nature, timing and duration of my personal observations and mechanical recordings. As I have already stated, I decided to visit the class once a week and this decision remained unchanged. A weekly visit seemed to reconcile the demands of data manageability with the need to document swift changes in the children's story-related behaviour. The intervening days gave me time to write up my field notes, to transcribe recordings, to read and to reflect on what seemed to be happening in the classroom.

By early November a pattern developed which did not change substantially for the rest of the school year. I arrived at the classroom with the puppets shortly before the children, got out the tape recorder and helped Mrs G and Mrs P welcome the children to the class. The children always clamoured for the privilege of looking after Charlie and Bill so I then chose two to hold them during their free play activities. I then set about observing book-related activities as Mrs G and her helpers shared books with individuals or small groups or as unguided children chose to look at books individually or in small groups, 'reading' them aloud to an audience or talking their way through them. This observation was always interwoven with responding to children's demands for me to help them with whatever they were engaged in, admire an achievement or read a story to a small group.

This last activity was, of course, yet another example of distorting intrusion, but I judged that to consistently refuse this invitation would be to present an inconsistent and unhelpful image of

my thoughts about books, about what they might hold for children and of how adults can help make this available. Mrs G also encouraged me to meet this request just as she encouraged Mrs P to do so and also all the floating population of adults and adolescents that passed through the classroom. I did not always respond to the children's urgings, sometimes pleading that I was busy or had unspecified 'work' to do when I did not wish to be taken away from observation.

When the time came for the class story session, usually shortly before playtime (or, failing that, at the end of the morning session), I saw that Bill was safely asleep, that Charlie was in the care of a child who would remain sufficiently calm not to disturb the story, and that the tape recorder was placed appropriately to record the session. I placed myself to the side of the children so that I could observe their actions and take note of who spoke when without distracting their attention from Mrs G.

After the story and the ensuing discussion were over the children usually sat at tables for a drink and a snack before going out to play. Mrs G saw this as an opportunity for small group talk and encouraged me to sit at one of the tables and join in the children's conversation. Then came playtime when I found myself helping them on with their coats, assisting in supervising them in the outdoor play area and taking children to the toilet. After outside play, as the children settled down to further indoor activities, I chose two or three who volunteered to help Charlie tell a story to Bill and we all went off to the Maths Resource Room.

When we returned, I spent the rest of the session in observing book-related activities or responding to requests from the teacher or children. This might mean joining in the Farmer's in his Den, tasting

the cakes a group of children had baked or dealing with minor misdemeanours.

At 'home time' after I had helped Mrs G and Mrs P hand the dinner children over to the dinner ladies and the others to those who had come to fetch them, I helped Mrs G and Mrs P tidy up. As I did so I exchanged ideas, principally with Mrs G, about such matters as achievements of particular children, problems of the children's parents, children's books, what Mrs G was endeavouring to do in the classroom particularly in relation to preparing the children for reading and writing, and other related matters.

Some days the morning's activities would include a trip to the school bookshop. Soon after school started, those who had some 50 pence saved on their bookshop cards were assembled, usually by Mrs P, and taken off to the bookshop. I accompanied Mrs P on a number of these visits to observe how the children went about buying books and what kind of assistance they were given.

As can be seen from this account, this kind of immersion in the activities of such a class does not lend itself easily to neat decisions about the extent and precise nature of personal observation or the duration and timing of mechanical recording. To have made crisp schedules on these matters would have prevented me from responding appropriately to the demands which were quite legitimate for the teacher and children to make of another adult in the room. This would have given me an odd and unhelpful status in their eyes and denied me the opportunity for much learning about the patterning of meanings that operated in the class.

I did manage, with minimal interruption, to record and observe the class story session on every visit except one, when the tape was

faulty. I also managed on every visit from the third, to record two or three individuals 'helping' Charlie to tell a story to Bill from a book in front of them. It was the observation of book-related activities that was most affected by demands for me to participate in what was going on. Thus I cannot guarantee that I noticed all or even the most significant book-related events in the nursery classroom or in the room that served as the school bookshop. I must also emphasise that this observation of book-related activities evolved during the study. Initially I focussed mainly on trying to capture the language children used as they looked at books, with or without adults. As my definition of the case developed, I also looked at the relationship which the children often seemed to be trying to establish with a real or imaginary child audience, by means of gesture and stance, as well as through words. I also came to look for remarks flung out by children in the course of other activities that referred to events or characters in books, and at play that seemed influenced by a particular book experience.

2.3

Transcriptions

The accuracy of my transcription of these school tapes is certainly not guaranteed. I encountered many more ambiguities and indecipherable stretches, especially on the tapes of the class story sessions, than I did on the home tapes. These problems in word identification seem attributable partly to a high incidence of speakers talking simultaneously, partly to the greater distance between speakers and the recorder and partly to the teacher's own inability to establish to her satisfaction what every child meant by

every utterance. I was also hampered by a reluctance to trespass on Mrs G's goodwill by asking her to check each transcript. Consequently, I have relied on repeated playings and my own intuition to establish the words spoken and where I cannot, I have marked the utterance as indecipherable.

As to the layout of the transcript, I have used an approach similar to that adopted for the home tapes, placing the utterances of all the speaking participants on the left of the page in chronologically sequential order, with braces enclosing simultaneous or overlapping speech, and the printed text on the right, together with some information about the pictures. The one modification of the 'home story' format was to include some relevant information from my personal observation about such matters as exits and entrances to the classroom and the children's actions that seem to impinge on the verbal interaction.

My reasons for adopting this format are those that I advanced in discussing the transcript of the home stories. The modification to the format of adding observational information is made because the greater organisational complexity of the classroom involved numerous intrusive comings and goings and other physical distractions which a purely verbal transcription neglects, but which may substantially affect the verbal interaction.

2.4

The unofficial record

As I have indicated above, I have relied on intuition to identify words spoken, as well as making use of it to inform my interpretation of the actions and verbal interactions taking place in the classroom.

It is very probable that these intuitions were heavily influenced by my previous first and second hand experience of nursery and infant classes, my high opinion of the sympathetic and imaginative professionalism of Mrs G and Mrs P, my experience of sharing books with young children in and out of school as well as by my developing understanding of the patterns of experience and meaning of individual children and of the class as a whole. In other words I had a considerably greater amount of relevant information to bring to the identification of utterances on the later tapes than I did to the earlier ones, where I was more dependent on more general knowledge, lacking a detailed acquaintance with the terms, phrases and patterns of significance that shaped the life of this class and these children.

CHAPTER NINE

The Findings of the Home Study

1

Introduction

1.1

Outline of Chapter

In this chapter with the aid of a systemic framework and the approaches to discourse analysis outlined in Chapter 4, I give a detailed picture of one child's experience of hearing stories read aloud at home and of talking these through with the reader, her mother. My intention is to explore the ways in which language is used in the narrative and in the accompanying conversation, how these forms and meanings relate to those of the extreme written and extreme oral varieties, and how they relate to each other, to investigate the structure of the larger entities into which they cohere and to explore how such an experience might have a bearing on the child's future as a reader.

1.2

Selection of Story readings for study

In accordance with the principles established in Chapter 7, the home investigation takes the form of a case study of one child, Anna, over a period of one year from the age of 3.0 to 4.0. Other investigations of similar phenomena have based their findings on a relatively large amount of data (Lomax 1989, Cochran Smith 1982). In Cochran Smith's study 100 story readings are investigated. However

the breadth of these data inevitably restricts the researcher to examining only a limited number of variables in her analysis. In the home study my intention is to construct as full and dynamic a description of the experience as possible, in order to provide some insight into the nature of the mechanisms that bring about the effect shown in Chapters 2 and 6 of providing a beneficial preparation for the future task of learning to read. So of the 51 story readings recorded in 18 separate sessions over the year of the study, I give a detailed analysis to only four.

The four chosen for analysis have been selected according to the following criteria:

The stories chosen include:

- a i traditional folk tales in recent editions;
 - ii modern picture books;

- b i books where the story is presented mainly through the words;
 - ii books where essential parts of the story are presented through the pictures;

- c i books receiving critical approval for their literary and artistic merit;
 - ii books less highly thought of in these terms;

- d i books which Anna and her mother had read several times before;
 - ii books relatively new to them;

- e i story readings to which Anna made extensive verbal contributions to the narrative (5 utterances or more);
- ii story readings in which she played little part in the construction of the narrative (one utterance or fewer).

f Story readings from all four quarters of the year.

Using these categories, I picked readings of Pat Hutchins' Rosie's Walk (RW), Maurice Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are (WT) and Vera Southgate's Ladybird Easy Reading versions of The Enormous Turnip (ET) and The Little Red Hen (LRH).

Table 9.1

Distribution of the four selected story readings between the categories listed

Story	a	b	c	d*	e	f**
RW	ii	ii	ii	4	ii	6.9.78
WT	ii	ii	ii	8	ii	17.5.78
ET	i	i	i	2	i	16.10.78
LRH	i	i	i	1	i	21.2.78

* number of earlier readings recorded

** date

1.3

Anna's experience of stories

At three years old Anna led an unremarkable life for a middle class British child in the last part of the twentieth century. Like

very many other British children of her age she spent much of her day at home with her mother and one sibling (a sister some two years younger). During this time the three of them talked to each other as they moved between play activities, household chores and the feeding, washing, dressing and undressing of the children. The talk that accompanied, directed and interpreted these domestic activities was of the sort that has been fully documented elsewhere and is not the concern of this study (Snow 1979, Wells 1981, Tizard and Hughes 1984).

But in common with very many other middle class children (and with rather fewer working class children) Anna had an experience of language that went beyond the confines of the talk that accompanies domestic and play activities. For her experience of story was extensive. At home she usually listened to three or four stories a day, often more. Deviations from this pattern, caused by visitors, particular TV programmes or illness, were few and were normally compensated for by extra stories at other times. This meant that in the course of one year, 1978, three year old Anna was involved in some one thousand story readings at home, in addition to any experienced at the nursery school she joined in September. Of course many of these were re-readings of old favourites, but over the year her mother noted 136 titles of stories read to Anna and there were others, not noted, read by Anna's father, grandmother or visitors.

1.4

Outline of analytic approach

As I have stated above, the concern of this chapter is to give a close analytic examination to four of these story readings. Where

possible I set these findings against what we know of young children's experience of linguistic interaction with adults in other situations, away from books. I also describe those features of the story reading sessions that cannot be captured in a linguistic analysis, as these might nonetheless have a bearing on how this experience can make a positive contribution to learning to read.

For reasons outlined in Chapter 7, I use the frameworks of systemic grammar and discourse structure as my primary analytic tools, before turning to those other observations that seem necessary to the presentation of a full description of these encounters with books. For the systemic analysis I examine in turn the levels of situation, semantics and structural configurations, concluding the systemic analysis with an account of the relations between the features observed at these different levels.

2

Analysis of situational features

Following the practices adopted in Chapter 3, in examining the situational features I add a consideration of the situation's physical properties to the three dimensions established by Halliday, namely field, tenor and mode. I begin the examination at this level with this additional category.

2.1

Physical

Physically there appears to be nothing distinctive about story reading to set it apart from the situations of other verbal interactions between mother and child. Anna usually hears her stories

at bed-time and sits on her mother's knee, or close by her. There is nothing unusual in such close physical contact. However since these story readings function (in part at least) to settle Anna for the night, they are physically removed from the scene of most of the day's activities and also from other members of the family. Although there are interruptions from the doorbell, the telephone or Anna's father looking for a dummy for her sister, these are few (eight in 51 recorded stories) and in respect of this physical protection from other activities the situation is very different from meal-times, lego-sessions or sorting the washing.

2.2

Field

This Halliday defines as

the socially recognised action the participants are
engaged in, in which the exchange of meanings has a part.
(Halliday 1978, p. 143)

The 'socially recognised action' we are concerned with here is two fold: settling Anna for the night and the reading of stories. Anna is already fed, washed and in her night clothes, physically ready for sleep. The ^lsetting that remains to be done is a psychological matter. Indeed the 'socially recognised action' is distinct from most others in which parent and child involve themselves in the course of the day, in that both as story reading per se and as settling a child for sleep, this 'socially recognised action' is largely linguistic.

In most of the other situations in which Anna talks with her mother, the action is physical: the language serves to accompany direct and interpret practical physical activities. But the talk here between Anna and her mother as they co-operate in the physical act of

turning the pages, can hardly be said to be the servant of practical activity. Their language is not merely a means to turning the pages nor to any other physical end. They talk, not in order to accomplish some physical act more effectively, but in order to construe the fictive events represented in the pages of a book and to construct a verbal narrative of these fictive events. Thus, as I explain in greater detail in the analysis of discourse structure, they are partly concerned to understand and enjoy their acquaintance with a set of characters and events and the patterned relationship of these with one another. They are also concerned to construct a patterned narrative text that is aesthetically pleasing. Behind all this lies the concern of Anna's mother for her daughter to turn her thoughts inwards and to bring their minds into harmony in an enjoyable way that soothes Anna, and makes her ready for sleep. Anna is concerned to share this process of exploration and construction with her mother, to settle her mind at the end of the day.

In describing the field of these story tellings I have moved into the world of concerns and intentions. This is inevitable if the description is to be more than superficial, precisely because of the heavily linguistic and intimately inter-personal nature of the action under discussion. An outsider (raised in a similar culture) would recognise the field of these transcripts, but what matters is not only those features that make such recognition possible, but also what Anna and her mother think they are doing.

However, what should be emphasised here is that in these story readings the 'socially recognised action' is a purely verbal amalgam of explanation and aesthetically patterned language beneath which lies the constant theme of bringing two minds together harmoniously so that

the child will be receptive to sleep.

The contrast I present above between the talk that accompanies action and the talk of story time which constitutes action, is over-simple. There are other situations in which talk is the master rather than the servant of practical activity. When Anna and her mother sit together watching It's a Knockout on the television, or look out of the window at the birds in the garden, they are likely to use language with no practical end in view, purely to make sense of what it is they are looking at. When Anna sings a song about the colours of the rainbow that she has learnt at nursery school, again she has no practical end in view and is solely concerned to construct a patterned text through whose metaphor she can enter her mother's mental world. But none of these activities is composed of such sustained language, nor of language that is as closely woven a combination of conversation and patterned text as is the activity of reading stories with young children in the way that Anna's mother reads with her. The television talk is likely to be fragmentary, subordinated to the uncontrollable pace of the action on the screen. As they watch the birds in the garden, the talk is likely to slide away from an explication of what is happening onto other topics or to practical activities such as feeding the birds or keeping the cat away. And in neither case is the activity at all likely to involve the production of a patterned text. Of course a song is precisely such a text, but it is brief, lacking the sustained quality of story readings and any sort of interwoven conversation would violate the patterning unacceptably.

Only oral story-telling remains as comparable in terms of field. But, like many children today, Anna has little experience of hearing

oral stories: her mother prefers the support of a text. Of course they share many oral narratives of events in their own lives, of things that they have done together or apart, or stories of other people close to them, but, these tend to be interjected into conversation, as anecdotes performing a variety of functions, and they are less polished and patterned than the stories they share from books.

So in terms of field, these story reading sessions are set apart, both from the practical activities in which language plays a subservient role and from the other purely verbal activities in which language of an explicatory or performing sort is recognised as the desirable end product, not merely a contributor to a process. Of the various alternatives put forward for comparison, these story reading sessions are closest to songs and oral story tellings in that they are verbal constructs, through which the participants may gain a greater mental affinity. But they are distinct from oral story tellings in respect of their patterning and distinct from songs in their interweaving of conversation with the construction of patterned text. Interweaving of different elements will be seen to be a centrally important attribute of these sessions at a number of different levels of analysis.

The presence of the pictures and the attention which both Anna and her mother direct at these, is an additional feature which makes these story readings distinctive in terms of field.

2.3

Tenor

Tenor, of course, denotes the role relations embedded in a

situation. As Anna and her mother sit reading a story, the relationship between the participants seems less distinctive than the action. It has the informal, well established and emotionally charged quality of most of the situations in which parents and young children talk with each other. Anna sits on her mother's knee, or snuggles up beside her as the stories are read. Quite typically her mother is the person with whom she has had the longest and the closest relationship of her life so far. But although her mother calls up shared experiences of going into the attic and Anna talks of her own turnip plant, the closeness, the emotionality and the long history of the relationship do not dominate these texts. Both mother and child defer to an unseen third person, the author of the story being read, a participant who is present only through the words and pictures of the printed text, but who is nonetheless the dominant participant in all the recorded sessions. Thus the tenor of these story readings is very different from that of other talk.

2.4

Mode

Whether the communicative channel is spoken or written, dialogue or monologue shapes and limits the kind of communication that can develop. In this respect also these story tellings seem at first glance deceptively unremarkable. Anna and her mother usually take conversational turns as parent and child so often do. But within this dialogue, and guided by the text in front of her, Anna's mother engages in some quite extensive monologue (as many as 13 consecutive uninterrupted utterances in Where the Wild Things Are and 15 in The Enormous Turnip), in which she reads large stretches of the printed

text without any overt contribution from Anna. Wells' studies of oral language at home show that in conversational interaction between parents and pre-school children, such extended monologue is unusual and is, indeed, confined to story telling and reading. (Wells 1981a).

There is a further peculiarity about the mode of these story readings. Sometimes mother and child join together to produce the same words (or virtually so) simultaneously (or almost so), in what is apparently intended as a duologue - that is to say the two speak more or less in unison. This is true of approximately one third of the narrative utterances in the reading of The Enormous Turnip. This particular feature is one that does not seem to have been observed in the situations in which child speech has more usually been recorded.

2.5

Summary and discussion of the situational features of these story readings

The situation in which these story readings take place is peculiar in all four respects examined: in its physical nature, in its field, in its tenor and in its mode.

However, I should stress that although these features set these story readings apart from Anna's other daily activities, yet mixed in with the distinctive features are many very normal features, such as the physical closeness of mother and child and the occasional deviation from the field of 'story reading' to some other preoccupation.

I have noted that within the field of story reading itself there is a mingling of the distinctive patterned production of the narrative and the more familiar and apparently disjointed quality of the

interwoven conversation. Although this patterning and comparative absence of patterning will be explored more fully at the level of discourse structure, what should be emphasised here is that it is this interweaving that is the most distinctive feature of the field of these story readings. We are dealing neither with a performance nor a conversation, but a combination of the two. This interweaving is also the most salient feature of the tenor, since the third participant who makes such a significant contribution to the narrative stretches, has no place in the interwoven conversation, and in terms of mode it is precisely the interweaving of monologue and dialogue that characterises this situation.

3

Analysis of semantic features

Following the pattern of Chapter 3, I examine the semantic features of the utterances of which these story readings are composed under the headings of the three metafunctions: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual. As I stated in that chapter, in Halliday's model, the choices made within these metafunctions are largely determined by the values of the three components of situation-field determining the ideational, tenor the inter-personal and mode the textual. The purpose of this semantic analysis then, is to see how the distinctiveness observed at the level of situation is realized in the three components of the semantic level. However an utterance by utterance analysis of semantic content is limited. To get a fuller picture of the meanings of these story readings it is necessary to examine them in terms of larger patterns of meaning. This semantic examination of individual utterances will therefore be less

informative than the examination of their discourse structure in Section 5 of this chapter.

3.1

Classification of utterances into narrative and conversational

If the interweaving of different features is to be explored in such an utterance by utterance analysis then the first necessary step is to classify the utterances into the two broad categories of narrative and conversation before proceeding to an examination of their semantic distinctiveness. In making this classification I have relied on intuition in carrying out what has proved to be a very straightforward procedure. There is a clear and constant distinction between the verbal construction of the story (the narrative) even when this departs from the printed text, and the talk between Anna and her mother about what is happening in the story, about the process of reading or about such matters as the coins in Anna's lap. The only utterances I am unable to classify in this way are the very few (9 out of a total of 333) where too many words were indecipherable.

Although conversation plays a part in every one of these story readings, the distribution of these narrative and conversational utterances is not the same for every story reading, as table 9.2 shows.

Table 9.2

Distribution of conversational and narrative utterances

Story	All Classifiable Utterances			Conversation			Spoken Narrative		
	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother
RW	50	15	35	39	15	24	11	2	9
WT	74	19	55	35	19	16	39	0	39
ET	119	42	77	21	11	10	98	29	69
LRH	81	21	60	34	16	18	47	5	42
TOTALS	324	97	227	129	61	68	195	36	159

At certain points in the analysis it has also been useful to make a distinction within the conversational category between utterances related to the story and those that are not. I have made this distinction in terms of whether the overt topic of the utterance is concerned with the story being read so that

Bye-bye Rosie!
Mother RW50

is classified as story-related, even though the covert topic is probably settling Anna for sleep. The distinction is more difficult where the 'language' is composed of non words such as

uh, uh uh uh
Anna WT26

For this reason I have omitted such utterances (those composed of non-words) from the following table.

Table 9.3

Distribution of story-related and other conversational utterances

	All Topically Classifiable Conversational Utterances			Story-Related Utterances			Other Utterances		
Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother
RW	37	15	22	34	15	19	3	0	3
WT	25	11	14	15	5	10	10	6	4
ET	20	11	9	18	11	7	2	0	2
LRH	32	15	17	22	10	12	10	5	5
TOTALS	114	52	62	89	41	48	25	11	14

3.2

The ideational component

Within the framework of systemic grammar, the ideational component or propositional content of an utterance is conceived of as the combination of the experiential and logical content of the utterance, together with the degree of explicitness or independence from the extra-linguistic context with which these are represented. I deal with these three aspects of the ideational component in turn, examining first the experiential content of the utterances within each transcript, then their logical content and thirdly the explicitness with which these are presented. In each case I deal with the narrative and conversational utterances separately. I then summarise these features and examine any differences between the contributions of mother and child in respect of each feature. Finally, I consider

the rules which seem to underlie the patterning of the ideational component.

3.2.1

Experiential content

3.2.1.1

Experiential content in the narrative utterances

Taking the narrative utterances first, we see that the experiential content, or subject matter of the utterances of these four story readings is rather different from that of non-story conversation with young children, not least because it often transgresses the laws of physical reality. In all the story readings examined here there are characters that Anna has neither met nor is likely to meet. The events and surroundings through which these characters make their way are similarly removed from her first hand experience. Hens walk around with baskets in their beaks talking with pigs, small boys sail alone and unharmed through monster-infested seas and turnips grow bigger than the biggest water-melon. Where the events, surroundings or characters are not fantastic they tend to be very remote. In The Little Red Hen wheat is ground in a mill by a miller, both of them closer to Chaucer's time than to our own. Muscle power is all that can be brought to bear on the problem in The Enormous Turnip. The hen in Rosie's Walk goes past a pond, haycocks and beehives on a farm that is prettier, tidier and less complicated than any farm Anna might have seen. Max has no outboard motor on his boat in Where the Wild Things Are. Indeed all these stories operate in worlds that lack the mechanical and social complexity of the world

Anna inhabits. This remote simplicity pervades the ideational content of the narrative utterances.

In the story-readings under examination, the narrative utterances are sharply distinct in terms of their experiential content from those conversational utterances classed as non-story talk. Their topics are not only quite removed from the immediate physical surroundings in which the story reading is taking place, but they also concern people, places and things which have a fantastic quality that moves them beyond the bounds set by the physical rules that govern Anna's first-hand experience. This remoteness from Anna's first hand experience may not be such a strong characteristic of all the stories Anna hears. But it does set these story readings apart from most non-story talk, where Wells has shown the dominance of topics related to the child's own first-hand experience (Wells 1981c).

What should also be noted is that in each case the set of narrative utterances also has a high degree of density of information. This is true even where, as in The Enormous Turnip there is extensive repetition, for it is the acts that are repeated not merely the telling. The narrative utterances are tightly packed with relevant well organised information.

Then all around, from far away across the world,
he smelled good things to eat.
Mother WT 66.

is typical of the rich supply of information with which each narrative utterance is filled.

3.2.1.2

Experiential content in the conversational utterances

The conversational utterances, on the other hand, are rather less

densely informative. This is not a matter of explicitness but of the extent of the propositional content whether explicit or not.

He's jumping into the tree, that one, isn't he?
Mother WT49

contains more information than many of the other conversational utterances, but still substantially less than the narrative utterances. But there is a greater variety of topic as they move between the world of Anna's first-hand experience and the world of the story being read. On the whole it is the world of the story that dominates: where Anna's first hand experience enters the conversation it is usually as an illumination or extension of something in the story, not as a distraction from it. Utterances quite unconnected with the story are few as shown in Table 9.3 and never amount to as many as half of the total of conversational utterances for any one story reading. Anna talks about her money intermittently in The Little Red Hen, but her mother gives only perfunctory responses, reserving most of her own non-story remarks for the beginning or end of each session.

I wish to emphasise that objects and events in the immediate physical environment are, by and large, kept at bay in this conversation. What the participants are not talking about has significance. Anna and her mother are not talking about Anna's pyjamas, the toy animals on the chair or the plant on the window sill. Instead they are talking almost exclusively about what is happening or might happen in the story, directing their words (and thoughts) towards the business of making sense of the book in front of them. To explore this more fully involves considering these story readings not as collections of utterances but as discourse structures with their own coherence and patterns of interdependent meaning. Such

exploration is carried in Section 5.

In some of their conversational utterances Anna and her mother make links between the remote and fantastic worlds of the stories and the world of Anna's own first-hand experience. They do this by means of the life to text and text to life moves of which Cochran-Smith writes (Cochran Smith 1982). Anna talks about the ease of pulling up her own turnip with a pride that can only come from the awareness of the hard won success of the combined efforts of all the characters in The Enormous Turnip. Her mother explains the hole in the mill floor in The Little Red Hen by calling up Anna's experience of going into the attic. She draws on Anna's understanding of Rosie's safety at the end of Rosie's Walk to explain how hens are kept in coops in the 'real' world. Elsewhere there are implicit connections between the story and what Anna knows from her first-hand experience.

But observations of this sort account for only a minority of their story-related conversational utterances. Most instead make no reference to first-hand experience. They arise as mother and child are looking at the pictures. In all of these books the illustrations are highly informative. Without them all the stories would be poorer in detail and significance, and Rosie's Walk would be quite empty of incident. Much of the conversation between Anna and her mother in the reading of this story is concerned to construe these pictures, through utterances such as:

A fox is following her.
Anna RW5

Yes he wants to eat Rosie,
Mother RW19

D'you know the fox can't get Rosie hen in, in, in her cage.
Anna RW44

In these comments mother and child are making sense of the pictures in

the light of the spoken text. These interpretive conversational utterances cannot be classed as life to text or text to life moves, since there is no reference to any outside experience. But to consider what they are involves examining their interdependence and therefore must be postponed for the time being.

Neither mother nor child is totally immersed in the events of the story: there are moments of detachment for both of them during which they talk about the act of reading itself.

Where are we now?
Anna LRH

asks Anna when she has lost the place in The Little Red Hen.

I'll do it
Anna ET110

she says with determination as she tackles the end of the story in The Enormous Turnip. Her mother refers to an earlier reading of Where the Wild Things Are when she recalls how Anna liked some of the monsters "last time". With little metalinguistic remarks such as these Anna and her mother move outside the story and look on the reading of the story as an event in itself. So in their story-talk they move between treating the story as a reality and as a representation, sometimes looking through the telling, and sometimes at the telling itself.

Like their exploration inside the story world, these comments have only limited predictability: they are about the reading of the story in hand, but within that their content is not pre-determined. In both kinds of story related utterance, mood, whim and current preoccupations appear to play a part in deciding what is said, producing a controlled randomness that is midway between the orderliness of the spoken narrative and the apparent anarchy of

informal conversation.

3.2.2

Logical content

3.2.2.1

Logical content in the narrative utterances

The nature of the story logic that binds together the narrative propositions is a matter of discourse structure and is examined under that heading. But the narrative utterances also possess their own individual logical content. The high density of clearly differentiated experiential information which they contain is integrated in a variety of relationships, some of the most complex of which are in *Where the Wild Things Are*. The following utterance exemplifies this logical complexity.

But the wild things cried
"Oh please don't go, we'll
eat you up, we love you so!"
Mother WT68

3.2.2.2

Logical content in the conversational utterances.

By contrast, in the conversational utterances the logic seems rather simpler. The conversational utterance with perhaps the greatest logical complexity is:

And, and that's why hens sleep in them,
so that foxes can't get them.
Mother RW48

Here two propositions are placed in precise relation with each other. But in the narrative example cited above, such a relationship is embedded inside a third proposition, producing a greater degree of

logical complexity.

3.2.3

Explicitness

3.2.3.1

Explicitness in the narrative utterances

Even if, as in Rosie's Walk, they do not tell the whole story, the narrative utterances are explicit and can stand independent of the pictures that accompany them. As with most of the features of this kind of story reading, this fact is so commonplace to anyone with experience of reading children's picture books that it is in danger of escaping the attention it deserves. Both mother and child are looking at highly informative pictures. Both share a history of experiences. Each has quite extensive knowledge of the other's mental world. But in their narrative utterances neither relies on this shared extra-linguistic context. Instead they are concerned to produce a construct that is semantically self-contained.

All of these stories are familiar to Anna, some having been read as many as eight times before, but although her mother deviates from the printed text on a number of occasions it is not to take a semantic short cut: she does not resort to appeals to this shared past experience. Instead she brings to every narrative utterance an explicitness that gives her words a semantic independence both from their past experiences of the story and from the relevant and explicit pictures that are present on almost every page of the printed text. There is no communicative necessity for utterances as explicit as:

Every day Little Red Hen went to the fields to watch the
grains of wheat growing big and tall and strong
Mother LRH21

or

And the big dog and the black cat and the tiny wee mouse all
had turnips for dinner
Anna ET111

Such explicitness is, of course, notably absent from most informal face to face interactions between participants who know each other well. As I have shown in Chapter 3, utterances produced in conversations of this sort in the extreme oral variety, place heavy semantic reliance on shared knowledge and are often hard for the outsider to construe. This is particularly true of conversations between young children and their caretakers (Wells 1981c).

Even if the participants are not well known to one another and the situation is rather more formal, utterances produced in face to face interactions may still be markedly less explicit than the narrative utterances produced by Anna and her mother. As I have indicated in Chapter 3, explicitness is likely to be considered unnecessary where conversation concerns matters in the speakers' shared physical context, such as an event they are watching, or printed material they are both looking at.

Indeed Hawkins found an absence of explicitness among the working class seven year olds he asked to make up a story about a set of pictures in front of both child and investigator (Hawkins 1969). Unlike Anna and her mother, these children created narratives that were relatively inexplicit, depending on the picture for essential information. This study has often been criticised (Rosen 1972, Cooper 1975, Edwards 1976) for being based on a situation in which there was no clear communicative need to be verbally explicit as both

investigator and child could see the sequence of pictures on which the child's narrative depended.

But Anna and her mother are both looking at sequences of pictures even more detailed and informative than those used by Hawkins in his study. The explicitness of their narrative utterances is not necessary to successful communication. This suggests that Anna and her mother are not really engaged in communication in these utterances. Instead they are in the business of producing a verbal construct. There seems to be a tacit agreement that this should be so, an agreement which both partners respect meticulously. At times both deviate from the printed text, as the narrative utterances quoted above (M: LRH 21 and A: ET 111) both show. In the case of the first, Anna's mother has inserted extra information by adding the words 'big and' to the printed text. In the case of the second, Anna has added the word 'wee', which although not adding extra information does explicitly emphasise the preceding 'tiny'. Alterations of this sort are frequent. But as Table 9.4 shows, the number of instances where they reduce the amount of explicitly stated experiential content of the utterances is equalled by the instances where they add to it. And in the majority of instances there is no observable change in explicitness. The rules framing these verbal constructs are explored in Section 5.

Table 9.4

Differences between printed and spoken narrative utterances in terms of explicitness

	Changes from written to spoken narrative involving:								
	reduction in explicitness			increase in explicitness			no change in explicitness		
Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother
RW									
WT	1	0	1				1	0	1
ET	2	0	2	5	0	5	15	5	10
LRH	2	0	2	1	0	1	5	1	4
TOTALS	5	0	5	6	0	6	21	6	15

3.2.3.2

Explicitness in the conversational utterances

The conversational utterances between Anna and her mother are far less explicit. For much of the time they are close to the extreme oral variety in their heavy reliance on the shared extra-linguistic context. In those utterances not related to the particular story being read, this inexplicitness is typical of the conversations with young children.

Which one would you like now?
Mother WT77

asks Anna's mother and the reader has to project herself into the situation in order to make sense of the question.

Uh this doesn't come off
Anna LRH10

exclaims Anna and it is only by making use of deductive reasoning based on the mother's subsequent utterances as well as imaginative projection into the situation that the reader can infer that Anna is talking about some coins she is holding that lack the foil covering of chocolate money.

Many of the story-related utterances are similarly inexplicit. Here the shared extra linguistic context is, of course, the pictures that mother and child are looking at as well as their shared experience. When Anna says:

He's doing that, doing that
Anna RW40

or her mother says:

Which one d'you like?
Mother WT52

the experiential content derives less from the verbal formulation than from the pictures, the gestures of mother and child and the shared memory of talking about favourite monsters. In these four texts there are 17 utterances of this sort (most in the readings of The Enormous Turnip and The Little Red Hen) where the reader can infer something of their meaning from knowledge of similar situations. For example, when Anna says:

Where are we now?
Anna LRH56

and her mother replies:

We're here
Mother LRH57

it is clear that they are talking about their place in the printed text rather than their geographical location. But when Anna says:

I'll show you where there's thing there
Anna LRH50

the reader's guess at the meaning is likely to be less certain. Nonetheless Anna's mother appears to understand as she responds in a way that seems equally gnomic to the outsider but quite satisfactory to Anna:

Where's the other one?
Mother LRH51

Excluding those that contain such unequivocally interpretable references to their situation as first and second person pronouns and time deictics such as 'now', 37 of the conversational utterances are verbally inexplicit. However, the reader of the transcript can infer at least an approximate experiential content for all but five of these, as Table 9.5 shows.

Table 9.5

Inexplicitness in the conversational utterances

	Story	Experiential content inferrable			Experiential content not inferrable		
		Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother
Story-related Utterances	RW	0	0	0	1	1	0
	WT	16	6	10	0		
	ET	6	4	2	0		
	LRH	7	2	5	3	2	1
	TOTALS	29	12	17	4	3	1
Non Story-related Utterances	RW	0			0		
	WT	1	0	1	0		
	ET	0			0		
	LRH	2	2	0	1	1	0
TOTALS		3	2	1	1	1	0

However, much of their conversation is more explicit than this.

A fox is following her
Anna RW5

says Anna, despite the fact that her mother can see the picture too,
and despite their shared experience of the story.

These story readings show a curious combination of explicitness
and inexplicitness, a combination which is explained only partly by
the shift between the fields of conversation and story reading,
between communicating through words and making a verbal construct.
Certainly when they ^{are} ~~all~~ engaged in constructing the narrative,

explicitness permeates every utterance. But it also seeps into much of their story-related talk. Perhaps a need for explicitness is created by the tenor of the situation, the increased formality and mental distance which the unseen third participant brings into the bedroom. Perhaps it comes from the concern of mother and child with the various unstated possibilities that lie within the story, so that although they draw on their shared past, they are actually focussing on their separate presents. Certainly they do this in order to share their mental worlds, to bring them into alignment. But this concern pre-supposes that each has a different starting point, and explicitness is therefore necessary to successful communication.

For in a very great number of their story-related conversational utterances, inexplicitness is limited solely to the identity of the topic of the utterance, an identity which cannot be easily deduced from an examination of other utterances. This indicates a very different tacit agreement from that underlying the explicitness of the narrative utterances. Here there is an assumption of a shared focus of attention (which may indeed be communicated by pointing or direction of gaze) that makes the specification of 'her', for example, in RW5 cited above, not only unnecessary, but perhaps also undesirable in that it would imply that attention was not shared. However this inexplicitness in relation to the topic of each utterance is often accompanied by a marked degree of explicitness in the accompanying comment.

He's got square teeth and those've got square teeth
Anna WT56

says Anna, and her mother adds:

Yours has got a different sort of nose, hasn't it?
Mother WT60

3.2.4

Summary of ideational features

The ideational content of the utterances in these texts is far from uniform. Mother and child are moving between very different areas of concern and very different ways of representing these concerns. While some of their utterances display many of the features of the extreme oral variety, features that studies of child language have shown to be typical of talk with young children, other utterances are surprisingly close to the extreme written variety.

The ideational content of their language is not only informative, consistent, highly organised and unusual in its subject matter. It is also highly explicit even though there is no communicative need for this to be so. This high degree of explicitness makes sense only if one recognises that what they are engaged in is not communicative talk, but the creation of a verbal construct which is almost invariant from one reading to the next.

They are concerned to shape a construct with its own formal qualities, and to get it right. They are engaged in a very different kind of semantic activity from talking about what they are going to eat, whether the baby needs changing or telling Anna's father about the visit to the park. Their narrative talk is semantically distinct not merely because of its experiential density, logical relations and explicitness, but because it functions less as a communicative act than an act of formal creation or re-creation in which mother and child join together to celebrate a patterning of situation, characters and events that have little superficial connection with the experiences of their everyday life. Thus the semantics of these utterances cannot be fully explored without an explanation of the

story tellings in terms of their discourse structure.

Their conversational utterances show a rather different and more varied pattern. A few are unrelated to the stories. These show all the features of the extreme oral variety in terms of ideational content. They are concerned with the here and now, or with events in the shared experience of mother and child. There is little consistency of topic and most are relatively inexplicit although they seem to communicate effectively what the speakers intend.

But most of the conversational utterances are topically connected to the story, and these story-related utterances show a degree of topical consistency. Many appear to be concerned to construe the story or components of the story, in ways that are examined in Section 5. Others are concerned with the topic of reading itself.

Though these story-related utterances show a degree of topical consistency, they do not follow each other in a predictable order. What is said at one reading is not what is said at the next: different possibilities are explored, different topics are commented on and different aspects of the reading process are mentioned.

In this story-related talk their utterances vary in explicitness. Most seem to assume the identity of the topic, and present a clearly stated comment, as if mother and child could depend on a shared focus of attention but not on shared thoughts or attitudes about the object of shared attention, despite the closeness of their experience.

This patterning of explicitness and inexplicitness is perhaps the most telling feature of the semantics of these utterances for it is a delicate semantic balancing act. As they make these shifts, mother and child convey to each other what it is that they share, what it is that they hold separately but wish to share, and what it is that they

are concerned to construct together.

In their conversation they do not always get it right. As in all conversations misunderstandings arise through insufficient explicitness on the part of the speaker, or through insufficient or inappropriate inferences on the part of the hearer. But these misunderstandings seem to be repaired to their mutual satisfaction.

What results from this subtle variation between explicitness and inexplicitness is a peculiarly intense combination of meanings unstated because already shared, meanings stated to be shared and meanings stated to create a verbal construct. All these meanings however, whether explicit or implicit, seem to possess a precision that brings its own pleasure. Anna cares that her mother should know exactly what she thinks. Her mother cares that Anna should remember 'last time' as a particular occasion. And together they are both intent on creating a complex set of meanings around each narrative.

3.2.5

The differences in ideational content between the utterances of mother and child

Thus far in my analysis of the ideational features of these story readings I have dealt with the utterances of parent and child together. But to what extent is this legitimate? Certainly it is Anna's mother who takes on the main burden of constructing the narrative. In Rosie's Walk and Where the Wild Things Are Anna contributes nothing to the production of the spoken narratives, although her story-related conversation shows that her attention is held. In The Little Red Hen she makes a number of minor contributions, in some of which she fails to get the words right,

producing

"I will" said the fox
Anna LRH 53

which her mother corrects to

"Not I" said the cat.
Mother LRH58

But even where Anna's contributions are 'wrong' they display the ideational features of her mothers spoken narrative: they are rich in experiential content of the same kind as the rest of the narrative, they are highly explicit and they express comparatively complex logical relations.

In The Enormous Turnip Anna comes into her own, producing 31 of the 98 narrative utterances, many in concert with her mother. In these she makes only occasional slips as when she starts to say 'woman' and corrects herself to 'man' in ET80. At the end of the reading she insists on taking over the narrative for herself with the words

No, I'll do it.
Anna ET 110

She then produces an utterance whose only deviation from the printed text lies in the insertion of the word 'wee'.

And the big dog and the black cat and
the tiny wee mouse all had turnip for
dinner.
Anna ET111

With utterances such as this Anna shows that when she does choose to join in, she knows how to play the game of producing ideationally acceptable narrative utterances. She is a successful apprentice.

As tables 9.2 and 9.3 show, the conversational utterances are far

more evenly distributed between mother and daughter. Anna plays her full part in conversation, both in story-related talk and in talk about other concerns. Here too her contributions have a very similar ideational profile to her mother's. This is demonstrated by my heavy citation of Anna's utterances in my explication of the experiential content, explicitness and logical content of their conversation.

3.3

The interpersonal component

3.3.1

The inter-personal component in the narrative utterances

The narrative utterances differ from the conversational utterances along the inter-personal as well as the ideational dimension. What is most notable in these terms about the narrative utterances is the narrowness of range of their inter-personal meanings. Anna can't read in the sense of reproducing the words printed on the page, but of course her mother can, and so reserves for herself the role of major information giver. Her mother is thus adopting a more formal relationship with Anna. The reason for this is at once obvious and surprising. Whereas in their conversational utterances they can wander at will as they are both autonomous and on their own, in the narrative utterances there is the unseen third participant, the author, who decides where they shall go. For of course Anna's mother is not speaking for herself, but for this author. The comparative formality that is now being created between Anna and her mother through the stricter observation of the status difference between them, is only a reflection of the formality and status difference

between author and reader. The authors of these texts know nothing of Anna or her mother as people and make no pretence of addressing them directly. The emphasis in all the narrative utterances is on the rich, varied and highly patterned ideational meanings. Anna is allowed to contribute, which she does extensively in The Enormous Turnip, and to a lesser extent in The Little Red Hen, but only in so far as she gets it right.

The narrowness of interpersonal range is, of course, another characteristic which shows the distance of the narrative utterances from the informal conversation with young children. Wells' studies have shown that it is very uncommon for the caretaker to act as information giver and judge of acceptability consistently over large stretches of text. Yet this is precisely what is happening in the narrative utterances (Wells and Montgomery 1979). It is highly unlikely that Anna would sanction her mother acting in this way so consistently in any activity other than the construction of narrative.

3.3.2

Conversational utterances

The conversational utterances have a very different inter-personal flavour. The informality, degree of permanence and emotional charge of the relationship between mother and daughter, noted earlier as a feature of the tenor of these story readings, is realized at the semantic level in a range of inter-personal meanings, exchanged between Anna and her mother. Through their words they renegotiate their relationship with each other, modifying it or reinforcing it with every conversational utterance. At the beginning of every story reading Anna asserts her right to choose and to be indulged and her mother takes on the role of the presenter of what is chosen.

The end of every session is marked by an announcement of supertime for her mother or bed-time for Anna, where her mother firmly claims the role of deciding parent and Anna accepts, often with some reluctance, the role of obedient child. Between these two boundaries, in their story-related conversational utterances, they adopt a number of different roles. Anna's mother supplies her with information.

Well in a mill they're upstairs and it's like
going into an attic, you need to climb up.
Mother LRH 44

She also invites Anna to express her feelings about the characters and expresses her own.

Which one d'you like?
Mother WT 52

I like that one
Mother WT 54

Anna requests explanations of many sorts from her mother, asking questions such as:

What are they doing?
Anna W7 43

and

Why she ate it herself?
Anna LRH 80

She also provides her own explanations, acting as a confident information giver with such utterances as:

D'you know the fox can't get Rosie
hen in in in her cage.
Anna RW 44

Sometimes Anna initiates a sharp, if temporary, change of topic by talking of the coins in her lap or the garment she has to take off.

What is clear is that in terms of inter-personal content there is a far greater symmetry between their conversational utterances than

there is between their narrative utterances. However the inter-personal value of each utterance cannot be fully explored or characterised without a consideration of its position relative to other utterances. The significance of Anna's assumption of the role of attention-diverter cannot be grasped without an examination of what precedes and follows it. Indeed to characterise fully the roles taken by each participant we need to know not only what roles each asserts, but also the extent to which such assertion is sanctioned by the other. To do this an examination of the inter-personal patterning within and between exchanges is necessary. This is undertaken in Section 5 of this chapter. What can, however, be confidently stated at this point is that each participant takes a variety of roles within these conversational utterances and that in all these roles there is a casual informality, an implicit recognition of the assumptions and experiences which mother and daughter share and of the emotional ties that bind them together.

3.3.3

Summary of inter-personal features

In terms of their inter-personal meanings the narrative and conversational utterances differ sharply. During the narrative stretches Anna's mother is the privileged presenter of the narrative construct and Anna is the sole member of the audience, who occasionally takes a walk-on part in the presentation, but always under her mother's firm direction. There is a marked status difference between them, which is accompanied by comparative formality. But in their conversation the tone is distinctly less formal and the distribution of status more even. Anna is free to play

many roles, none of which is scripted. The contrast is most evident when they move from one form of talk to the other, as in the beginning of The Enormous Turnip.

Mother The Enormous Turnip
Anna It's not as huge as that
Mother It is huger than that
It's huger than huger than huger
Anna It's not as huge as this
Mother No, it's not huger than that, no
Anna Thought it wasn't
Mother Once upon a time, in the spring, an
old man sowed some rows of turnip seed
in his garden.
ET 1-8

The formal and asymmetrical distribution of a restricted set of roles which characterises the narrative utterances is offset, mediated and modulated by the informal and more symmetrical distribution of a wider variety of roles in the surrounding conversation, a pattern that appears to be far more typical of young children's conversational experience. Again the new is embedded in the familiar.

3.4

The textual component

The textual metafunction binds the semantic elements into a cohesive whole. Again there are sharp contrasts between the conversational and the narrative utterances.

3.4.1

Narrative utterances

The narrative, quite unlike most informal conversation (whether involving young children or not) is textured into a cohesive unity. The narrative utterances of each story fit together, their textual

cohesion matching their constancy of topic. They are as cohesive as they are explicit. No utterance fails to connect with what has gone before or what comes after. Both characteristics combine to make the stories independent of the pictures and quite unconnected with the physical situation in which the story reading takes place. The strength of their texture is examined under the heading of discourse structure in Section 5, and the verbal means through which it is created is explored under the heading of cohesion at the level of structural configurations in Section 4.

3.4.2

Conversation

The conversational utterances, on the other hand, are tied more closely to the pictures, compensating for their own verbal inexplicitness by referring to elements in these pictures, elements in the physical situation, or in the past experience of mother and daughter. For the conversation supplies an explanatory setting in which the narrative utterances are embedded, a setting which is itself tethered both to the pictures they are looking at, to the coins in Anna's lap and to the memories of shared experiences. The tethering of this conversation provides a connection with the concrete and the familiar, that seems to help Anna hold on to the narrative and apprehend its self-sufficiency. Here too the means by which these connections are achieved will be examined at the level of structural configurations.

Summary and discussion of the semantic features of these story readings and conclusions

In terms of all three metafunctions these story readings can be seen as distinctive precisely in the way in which the unusual meanings of the narrative are surrounded and mediated by the rather more usual meanings of the accompanying conversation. This examination suggests that Cochran-Smith's categorisation of such accompanying conversation into orientation moves, life to text and text to life moves, is not an adequate description of what is going on here. Not only does this classification omit the interpersonal and textual dimensions of meaning, it also fails to capture the metalinguistic comments and more significantly the way in which Anna and her mother talk to construe the events of the story. Certainly both mother and child make text to life and life to text moves as already mentioned, but, as I have indicated, there are also other kinds of story related conversational utterances.

The meanings mother and child construct through the formal presentation of the narrative and those they establish through the story-related conversation in which it is embedded, are both necessary to their achievement of their prime conscious purpose, namely enjoyment in shared meaning. They share delight in the fate of the fox, in the pulling up of the enormous turnip, in the Little Red Hen's triumph over her lazy companions and in Max's safe return to his bedroom.

These shared meanings are richly varied in terms of their ideational, inter-personal and textual components, but can be thoroughly explored only by treating the narratives and the

conversations in which they are embedded as larger entities with their own patterning and structure.

Nevertheless this examination of the semantics of individual utterances has shown a highly complex interweaving of different kinds of meaning. The meanings of the narrative utterances certainly tend towards those of the extreme written variety. The emphasis is on the ideational where there is a high density of experiential and logical content and a high degree of explicitness. Strong cohesive ties connect these utterances to each other. The conversational utterances tend to the extreme oral variety: the ties that exist tether them to their physical surroundings as well as to each other, and the emphasis is on the inter-personal, rather than the ideational. But the ideational content in these utterances exists even if it is relatively inexplicit. And the focus is predominately the clarification and elaboration of the meanings of the narrative. The varied inter-personal content makes this powerful, effective and significant in ways that are explored in Section 5.

4

Analysis of features of structural configurations

What follows is an examination of the linguistic forms, (principally lexis and syntax) used by Anna and her mother to realize the contrasting semantic patterns shown in Section 3. Following the procedure established in Chapter 3, I will examine these in turn, under the headings of transitivity, mood and theme.

4.1

Transitivity

4.1.1

Lexis

As I emphasised in Chapter 5, the study of children's lexical development is problematic and unfashionable. We do not know what Anna means by the words she utters, still less what she makes of those she hears. But we can observe the range of words she is familiar with and compare these with what little is known of the vocabulary of young children.

4.1.1

The lexical peculiarity of these story readings in general

Anna seems familiar with the words her mother produces in the reading of these four stories - or at least she seems unworried by them. Some of her requests for clarification concern puzzling features of the pictures, such as what the monsters are doing in the unaccompanied picture on pages 23 and 24 of Where the Wild Things Are, or the hole in the mill floor on page 33 of The Little Red Hen. As we have seen in looking at the ideational content of her story-related utterances, other such requests concern the motives of the characters.

Why will he climb out?
Anna RW15

She asks about the fox, and

Why does everyone not helping her?
Anna LRH31

She asks about the little red hen's farmyard companions. Her

questions are not about the words that she hears. She doesn't ask what words mean. Instead, as the semantic analysis has shown, she directs her enquiries about the text towards the underlying social and psychological framework in search of explanation for the actions it contains. Anna seems quite incurious about the words she hears her mother say. Of course we cannot conclude that she is therefore familiar with all of them. Even if she were, this would not necessarily mean that these words would have the same denotation for her as for the authors of the stories, or for an adult listener. But she certainly seems untroubled by them. The words in these stories do not deter Anna from a mental construction of the events or from the complex consideration of the story world which the semantic analysis indicated to be a central concern.

Yet many of the words in these narratives seem not to be common in the vocabulary of young children. A number of the words unknown to 10% or more of the five year olds in Quigley's study examined in Chapter 5, occur not only in the stories read to Anna, but even in Anna's own contributions to these story readings. In every case they appear to be used appropriately (Quigley 1973). Anna uses 'fox', 'in' and 'hen', all known to fewer than 90% of Quigley's five year olds and 'catch' known to less than 75%. Anna is only just three during these recorded uses.

Since few of the words used by Anna and her mother appear on Quigley's list, and since as I have pointed out, the reliability of Quigley's findings is open to question, the Mount Gravatt Study is perhaps a sounder guide (Hart, Walker and Gray 1977). A comparison between the words produced in some 10 minutes of story reading involving one child and her mother, with those produced by a large

number of children, each recorded over several hours, yields some interesting results. Many of the words produced by Anna and her mother do not appear at all on the 'most frequently used' list of 1123 words in the Mount Gravatt. This is not to say that these words were never used by the Mount Gravatt children. But none was used more than once, as explained in Chapter 5.

In the four story readings under examination, 53 of the words used are not on this list at all. Anna makes the first use of four of these and uses another eight after her mother has used them first. A further 16 words in the story readings are used only by children of five and a half or older in the Mount Gravatt study and of these Anna makes the first use of two.

Table 9.6

Words used by Anna and her mother unusual in terms of the Mount Gravatt study

	Absent from listing			Used only by children of 5½ or over
Used by mother and/or child	Hen [†] pond haycock mill beehive hay* notice* cage* hencoop* wild mischievous forest vines become world ocean tumble	private almost roar gnash claw stare blink rumpus enormous turnip [†] spring sow shine fancy gather wife [†] waist might	jersey jerk wee shake plenty huge* farmyard grain wheat plant mat grind miller baker bake lazy* attic*	across yard fence for* wolf hang week King far square seed plate pull carry start once
Used first by Anna	hay cage	huge lazy		fox square
Used subsequently by Anna	hen wife turnip	might wee shake	enormous rat	pull

* Used first in conversation [†] Used subsequently in conversation

But perhaps some at least of these differences are attributable to broader cultural differences between Britain and Australia and to the circumstances in which the speech samples were collected. For a more culturally and situationally relevant study we need to turn to Burroughs (Burroughs 1957). As stated in Chapter 5, the 330 children in the Burroughs study, observed over a duration of 100 minutes each

produced a total of 3504 recorded words. The four home recordings of the present study add up to only ten minutes in total and for much of this time Anna is silent. Yet 15 of the words spoken by Anna do not appear at all on the full Burroughs list. Of these 15, four are spoken by Anna. 1495 of the words in the Burroughs study were produced by four children or fewer. 12 of the words used by Anna and her mother are on this list and Anna makes the first use of one of these.

The remaining 2009 words in the Burroughs study are divided according to frequency of use into four groups of roughly 500 each, the first '500' containing those used most frequently and the fourth, those used least frequently. 18 of the words used by Anna and her mother appear in the third or fourth '500' and of these two are used by Anna. It should be remembered that Anna was under four at the time of these story readings whereas the children studied by Burroughs were all aged between 5 and 6½.

So 45 of the words used by Anna and her mother appear to be unusual in terms of the Burroughs listing, and Anna uses seven of these herself. Table 9.7 below indicates the words at issue.

Table 9.7

Words used by Anna and her mother unusual in terms of the Burroughs study

	Absent from listing	Used by 4 or fewer	Fourth '500'	Third '500'
Used by mother and/or child	hencoop* Haycock mischief almost gnash sail cry enormous might (noun) jerk wee farmyard plant miller lazy*	vines become ocean private roar claws blink huge* waist grains grind attic*	mill wild forest stare wife [†] sow baker	notice* suit turnip [†] spring shine fancy (verb) gather shake plenty wheat
Used first by Anna		huge		
Used subsequently by Anna	enormous might (noun) wee lazy		wife	turnip

* First used in conversation

† Subsequently used in conversation

These are by no means all commonplace words in the conversation of three year olds (or even five year olds) and it is hardly surprising that they were used very infrequently or not at all by the Burroughs children.

What should be emphasised at this stage is that one cannot say exactly what Anna understands these 'unusual' words to mean.

'Comprehension' questions have no part in these story readings. In every story reading Anna seems to understand enough to participate actively either in the construction of the narrative or in talk about the story world. If these are words for which she can find no satisfactory reference this does not appear to trouble her.

4.1.1.2

The lexical contrast between the narrative and conversational utterances

With the exception of 'hencoop', 'lazy', 'huge', 'attic' and 'notice' the 'unusual' words used by mother and daughter enter the text in the narrative stretches. Only two of the remaining 40 'unusual' words then make their way into the surrounding conversation. So the 129 conversational utterances in these four story readings contain 7 'unusual' words whereas the 195 narrative utterances contain 41. It should also be noted that none of these 'unusual' words appears in the non story-related conversation. These sharp contrasts clearly reflect the contrasts in informational density noted at the semantic level. There is a high particularity about the narrative utterances, partly achieved through this 'unusual' lexis.

Meanwhile in their conversation neither mother nor child is so consistently specific. I have already noted their shifts into verbal inexplicitness. These are realized in part by exophoric reference and substitution, features examined in detail in Section 4.3 under the heading of cohesive devices. Minor sentences of a particular type also realize such inexplicitness and are examined in Section 4.1.2. below under the heading of syntactic features.

4.1.2

Syntactic features

An examination of the syntactic features associated with transitivity reveals striking contrasts between the language of the spoken narrative and that of the conversation. A further contrast also emerges between the spoken and the printed narrative. For although (as I have already observed) in her reading Anna's mother does not significantly alter the semantics of the written text nor make any extensive changes to the lexis, her intonational patterning transforms complex sentence structures into something rather simpler.

4.1.2.1

Sentence types

I have classified all 333 of the spoken utterances of the Corpus into sentence types, with the exception of the nine utterances mentioned in Section 3.1, where too many of the words remain indecipherable. I have carried out this classification at a number of degrees of delicacy and in so doing relied heavily on the categories proposed by Crystal and Davy, allocating the spoken utterances to these according to the criteria specified (Crystal and Davy 1969). To identify syntactic differences between the written and the spoken narrative, I have also classified the printed text in the same way.

However I have found it necessary to supplement Crystal and Davy's classification system to deal fully with the texts under examination. The additions are of two sorts. Firstly, as well as incomplete sentences, I have included various categories of non-sentences - utterances whose intonation indicates that they are intended to be complete but which nevertheless do not meet the syntactic criteria to

be classed as major or even minor sentences. Secondly, I have found it necessary to classify the ^{co-ordinated}~~compound~~ sentences into further categories at a greater degree of delicacy since the class appeared to include sentences composed of clauses linked by a variety of different means, ranging from intonation to conjunctions expressing logical relations.

Table 9.8

Classification system for sentence type

	Broad syntactic type (Table 9.9)	Types of complete sentence (Table 9.10)	Types of major sentence (Table 9.11)	Types of co-ordinated sentence (Table 9.12)	Types of minor sentence (Table 9.13)
Corpus	All classifiable utterances or sentences	All syntactically complete sentences	All major sentences	All co-ordinated sentences	All minor sentences
Categories	Syntactically complete sentences	Major sentences	Simple sentences	Simple major clause with tag	Dependent finite
	Incomplete sentences inviting completion	Minor sentences	Co-ordinated sentences	Parenthetically connected clauses	Non-finite
	Contributions to other's sentences		Subordinating sentences	Aggregationally or temporally connected clauses	Composed of two or more SPCA elements
	Freestanding single words not classifiable as sentences		Mixed Sentences	Logically connected clauses	Composed of single SPCA element
	Freestanding non-words				

4.1.2.1.1

Broad Syntactic types

Table 9.9 below, shows that even at this very preliminary level of classification, there are marked contrasts between the spoken narrative and conversational utterances. But as might be expected the strongest contrast here is between the conversational utterances and the printed narrative.

Table 9.9

Distribution of utterances by broad syntactic type

		Conversation			Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
Story		Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of classifiable utterances	RW	39	15	24	11	2	9	2
	WT	35	19	16	39	0	39	11
	ET	21	11	10	98	29	69	53
	LRH	34	16	18	47	5	42	45
	Total	129	61	68	195	36	159	111
Syntactically complete sentences	RW	28	10	18	9	0	9	2
	WT	23	10	13	39	0	39	11
	ET	19	11	8	63	6	57	53
	LRH	29	14	15	41	2	39	45
	Total	99	45	54	152	8	144	111
Syntactically incomplete sentences inviting completion	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			0			0
	ET	0			5	0	5	0
	LRH	0			2	0	2	0
	Total	0	0	0	7	0	7	0
Contributions to other's sentences	RW	1	1	0	0			0
	WT	0			0			0
	ET	0			29	22	7	0
	LRH	0			3	2	1	0
	Total	1	1	0	32	24	8	0
Freestanding single words not classifiable as sentences	RW	8	4	4	1	1	0	0
	WT	2	1	1	0			0
	ET	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
	LRH	3	1	2	1	1	0	0
	Total	14	6	8	3	3	0	0
Non-words	RW	2	0	2	1	1	0	0
	WT	10	8	2	0			0
	ET	1	0	1	0			0
	LRH	2	1	1	0			0
	Total	15	9	6	1	1	0	0

The first point to note is that the spoken narrative contains substantially more utterances than the printed narrative does sentences. In a few cases this is achieved by adding to the printed narrative or by repetition. But in most cases the sentences of the printed narrative have been split into a larger number of utterances in the reading.

When we examine the distribution of types of utterance we can see that the printed narrative is composed entirely of complete sentences, whereas the spoken narrative also includes a number of incomplete sentences, some in free-standing form inviting completion, and rather more as contributions to the other's sentences. In the spoken narrative there is also a sprinkling of free-standing words not admissible as sentences and one clearly enunciated non-word.

The conversation contains a proportion of complete sentences similar to the spoken narrative, but in contrast it has no incomplete free-standing sentences: nothing is left in mid-air, nothing trails away. This is worth noting, since in Chapter 3 Crystal and Davy were cited as seeing the inclusion of such fragments as typical of informal conversation between adults (Crystal and Davy *op. cit.*). Perhaps their incidence in adult conversation is a function of the extent to which adult participants can expect each other to complete unfinished sentences either overtly or mentally. Perhaps it is a function of the extent to which adults are prepared to interrupt one another, or to recognise that others are not listening to what they have to say. What is more certain is that such unfinished sentences do not appear to be a characteristic of informal conversation between small children and their caretakers (Snow 1979 Wells 1981a).

The total of classifiable utterances in these conversations is

made up by a high proportion both of free-standing single words and also of non-words. As many as 20% of the conversational utterances in Rosie's Walk take this single word form. The 'oh', 'yeah', 'why?', 'no' and 'right' are of course typical of informal conversation. Also typical according to Crystal and Davy, and surely even more informal, are the non-word but language-like expressive noises that Anna and her mother produce, particularly in Where The Wild Things Are, which amount to some 28% of the conversational utterances in this story reading. 'Er', 'ah', 'um', 'whee' and 'ow' are sprinkled through the conversational sections of these texts. The point to note here is that these brief forms and language-like noises can carry little explicit ideational content.

So, in terms of syntactic completeness, we have at the two poles the well organised sentences of the printed narrative, apt vehicles for the explicitly conveyed experiential information noted at the semantic level and the more wide-ranging utterances of the conversation, including many which carry little ideational content.

In between stands the spoken narrative. By means of intonation Anna's mother has transformed many of the sentences of the printed narrative. She breaks up the two printed sentences of Rosie's Walk into 11 utterances, the 11 printed sentences of Where the Wild Things Are become 39 in the telling and the 53 printed sentences of The Enormous Turnip turn into 63. Quite how this is achieved will be further explored when the sentence types are examined more closely. It should also be noted that the numbers go the other way in The Little Red Hen as the 45 printed sentences are reduced to 41 utterances in the telling.

However this increase and decrease do not alter the capacity of

the text to convey experiential information explicitly. Nor is this affected by the high incidence of incomplete sentences, noted above. There are two kinds of such sentences: 'incomplete inviting completion' which denotes those where Anna's mother invites her to join in producing the narrative, and 'contributions to other's sentences' where mother and child are helping each other along in the business of producing well-formed sentences. The contrast between the high proportion of narrative utterances falling into these categories and their almost total absence from the conversation, surely reflects the dominant difference between the two kinds of utterance noted in the ideational dimension at the semantic level. In the narrative utterances Anna is often invited and sometimes accepts the invitation to join her mother in the business of making a narrative construct, whereas in the conversational utterances each speaks to tell the other something.

4.1.2.1.2

Types of complete sentence

A closer analysis of the complete sentences yields subtler information as is shown in table 9.10 below.

Table 9.10

Distribution of major and minor sentences

		Conversation			Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of complete sentences	RW	28	10	18	9	0	9	2
	WT	23	10	13	39	0	39	11
	ET	19	11	8	63	6	57	53
	LRH	29	14	15	41	2	39	45
	Total	99	45	54	152	8	144	111
Major	RW	19	7	12	1	0	1	1
	WT	17	6	11	18	0	18	10
	ET	15	9	6	60	6	54	52
	LRH	21	10	11	39	2	37	44
	Total	72	32	40	118	8	110	107
Minor	RW	9	3	6	8	0	8	1
	WT	6	4	2	21	0	21	1
	ET	4	2	2	3	0	3	1
	LRH	8	4	4	2	0	2	1
	Total	27	13	14	34	0	34	4

In classifying the complete sentences as major or minor (and in the subsequent subcategorisation of the major sentences into simple, and complex, and the minor sentences into finite dependent, non-finite, 2 + SPCA elements, and single SPCA element) I have

followed the criteria laid down by Crystal and Davy (op.cit.). This means that every sentence classed as major includes a subject and a predicator. But, as Crystal and Davy observe, there is an unclear dividing line between major sentences and those minor sentences classed as finite dependent. The preceding sentence is a case in point. Many words such as 'and', 'but' and 'so' are used as conjunctions to link co-ordinate clauses, but are also accepted as legitimate beginnings to a major sentence, where they have a textual rather than a syntactic function. I have therefore drawn a rather arbitrary line, classifying all SPCA utterances beginning with the co-ordinating conjunctions 'and' and 'but' as major sentences. Those beginning with 'because', 'so', 'like' and 'until', (where these words link the sentence with what has gone before) I have classified as minor sentences of the finite dependent type.

The classification made on this principle shows that in the printed narrative, with the exception in each case of the story's title, every sentence is of the major type. However, in the spoken narrative without any significant alteration in the wording, the mother's intonation has substantially altered this, particularly in the reading of Rosie's Walk and Where the Wild Things Are, thus bringing the ratio of minor to major sentences very close to that of the conversational utterances. In each case minor sentences provide some 20 to 25% of the total of complete sentences. This splitting of major sentences into smaller major sentences and accompanying minor sentences explains the increase, noted above, in the number of sentences in the spoken narrative in three of these readings, over their number in the printed text. As I have already observed, this does not affect the ideational content of the narrative, but it does

convey it in a more familiar vehicle- language composed in large part of minor sentences. This is typical of informal conversation, as noted by Crystal and Davy (op. cit.).

However, it is interesting to note that in all the seven cases where Anna contributes complete sentences to the narrative, she uses the more formally complete major sentence.

4.1.2.1.3

Types of major sentence

A finer examination of the structure of both major and minor sentences yields further relevant information. Table 9.11 below shows the distribution of the different types of major sentence.

Table 9.11

Distribution of types of major sentence

		Conversation			Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of Major sentences	RW	19	7	12	1	0	1	1
	WT	17	6	11	18	0	18	10
	ET	15	9	6	60	6	54	52
	LRH	21	10	11	39	2	37	44
	Total	72	32	40	118	8	110	107
Simple	RW	10	5	5	1	0	1	0
	WT	12	5	7	10	0	10	1
	ET	13	7	6	44	5	39	32
	LRH	14	7	7	16	1	15	27
	Total	49	24	25	71	6	65	60
Co-ordinated	RW	3	2	1	0	0	0	1
	WT	4	1	3	2	0	2	1
	ET	2	2	0	13	1	12	16
	LRH	3	0	3	2	0	2	2
	Total	12	5	7	17	1	16	20
Sub-ordinating	RW	6	0	6	0	0	0	0
	WT	1	0	1	5	0	5	1
	ET	0	0	0	2	0	2	3
	LRH	3	3	0	19	1	18	15
	Total	10	3	7	26	1	25	19
Mixed	RW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	WT	0	0	0	1	0	1	7
	ET	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
	LRH	1	0	1	2	0	2	0
	Total	1	0	1	4	0	4	8

The differences in distribution of these types of major sentence between the printed narrative, the spoken narrative and the conversation appear slight and therefore insignificant at first glance. Although one should be very cautious about drawing conclusions from such small numbers, they are nonetheless worth examining. The distribution that most neatly fits the pattern we have observed up to this point is found in the simple sentences and the mixed sentences (those containing both co-ordinate and sub-ordinate clauses). The conversation, as one might expect, contains the highest proportion of simple sentences, the printed narrative the lowest and the spoken narrative falls somewhere between the two. As to mixed sentences, the printed narrative contains the highest proportion, there is only one in the conversation and the spoken narrative falls midway between the two. Thus far we have conversation and printed narrative as the poles, one showing a higher proportion of simple structures, the other a higher proportion of complex structures. But the pattern changes when we look at sentences containing subordinate clauses (and no co-ordinate clauses). Although the conversation contains the lowest proportion of these structures it is the spoken rather than the printed narrative that contains the highest proportion. And the distribution of co-ordinated sentences varies the pattern further: it is very similar in the conversation and the printed narrative, but rather lower in the spoken narrative.

What does this mean? In reading these stories aloud, Anna's mother splits up some complex sentences of all types into smaller simple sentences. When the stories are looked at individually it can be seen that this is particularly evident in Where the Wild Things Are, and to a slightly lesser extent in The Enormous Turnip. But a

puzzling feature remains - the close similarity of the proportion of co-ordinated sentences in the printed narrative and in the conversation, where Anna makes almost as much use of this construction as her mother. If co-ordinated sentences are so much a part of informal conversation between Anna and her mother, why does her mother feel the need to simplify them when she is reading aloud? By splitting them up is her mother then making these sentences less like, rather than more like, the language of informal conversation?

To answer this question we need to look more closely at the structure of these co-ordinated sentences.

4.1.2.1.4

Types of Co-ordinated sentence

We need to tread with particular caution here, as the number of sentences involved is by now very small. However, although the figures are small, the patterns are interesting and can still contribute to an understanding of the forms used to convey meaning in the case of these four story readings.

This superficial similarity, between the printed narrative and the conversation in terms of the incidence of co-ordinated sentences, melts away when these sentences are analysed with greater delicacy. I have divided them into four types. The first type is composed of single major clause with a tag on the end, for example

Yours has got a different sort of nose, hasn't it?

Mother WT60

The second type, the parenthetic, is made up of two simple major clauses juxtaposed without any intervening conjunction. Here the linkage is achieved solely by means of intonation, for example

No its not chocolate money, that's alright

Mother LRH11

The third type consists of two or more clauses joined by conjunctions expressing aggregational or temporal relations, for example

He's got square teeth and thos've got square teeth

Anna WT56

The fourth type consists of two or more clauses joined by conjunctions expressing some kind of logical relation, for example

They pulled and pulled with all their might
but they could not pull it up at all.

Mother ET32

Table 9.12

Distribution of types of co-ordinated sentence

		Conversation			Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of co-ordinated sentences	RW	3	2	1	0	0	0	1
	WT	4	1	3	2	0	2	1
	ET	2	2	0	13	1	12	16
	LRH	3	0	3	2	0	2	2
	Total	12	5	7	17	1	16	20
Type 1	RW	1	0	1	0			0
	WT	2	0	2	0			0
	ET	0	0	0	0			0
	LRH	0	0	0	0			0
	Total	3	0	3	0			0
Type 2	RW	2	2	0	0			0
	WT	1	0	1	0			0
	ET	1	1	0	0			0
	LRH	2	0	2	0			0
	Total	6	3	3	0			0
Type 3	RW	0	0	0	0			1
	WT	1	1	0	2	0	2	0
	ET	1	1	0	11	1	10	10
	LRH	1	0	1	2	0	2	2
	Total	3	2	1	15	1	14	13
Type 4	RW	0			0	0	0	0
	WT	0			0	0	0	1
	ET	0			2	0	2	6
	LRH	0			0	0	0	0
	Total				2	0	2	7

Key to types of co-ordinated sentence

- Type 1 Major clause with tag
- Type 2 Parenthetic
- Type 3 Linked by conjunction expressing aggregational or temporal relations
- Type 4 Linked by conjunction expressing logical relations

The pattern of distribution of these four types is very different from that of the co-ordinated sentences as a whole. In the printed narrative all the co-ordinated sentences are of types three and four, that is they are composed of clauses connected by conjunctions. 65% of these printed sentences are of compound type 3, with an aggregational or chronological connection, and a substantial 35% are of in compound type 4, with a logical connection.

This is not so in the conversation. Only 25% of the co-ordinated sentences are of compound types 3 or 4. 25% of these conversational sentences are of compound type 1 and 50% of compound type 2, where there is no overt verbal connection between the clauses. In both of these types the linguistic connection is intonational or implicit: it is not realized through the selection or organisation of the lexis. Because of this, the relation between the two (or more) clauses is of a rather vague and unspecific type. As has been noted in Chapter 3, such looseness of structure and lack of precision in terms of the kind of connection between the propositions, is seen by Crystal and Davy as typical of informal conversation (Crystal and Davy op. cit).

In the spoken narrative the picture is midway between the extremes of the conversation and the printed narrative. The proportion of compound type 3 sentences is slightly increased over the printed narrative, and the proportion of compound type 4 sentences slightly reduced. There are no compound type 1 or 2 sentences. What are the

actual changes from the printed text that these figures represent and do they really constitute a movement towards the forms of spoken language?

Where the compound type 4 sentences have disappeared in the reading aloud, what Anna's mother appears to be doing is to separate these into their constituent clauses so that, for example,

He pulled and pulled with all his might
but he could not pull up the enormous turnip

Printed narrative ET 11

becomes

And he pulled and pulled with all his might.
But he could not pull up the enormous turnip.

Mother ET 24-25

Anna's mother is using intonation to loosen the structural tightness of the printed sentence, but without losing the logical connection. Indeed separation of this one sentence into two, allows her to stress the word 'But' and to give this connection an increased significance. In so doing she brings the printed narrative closer to such sequences of conversational utterances as

And, and that's why hens sleep in them, so that foxes
can't get them.
So they're nice and safe.

Mother RW48-49

Finally, we should note that Anna's co-ordinated sentences, although few in number, tend to follow this pattern. Whereas in her conversation there are three of compound type 2, and two of compound type 3, the only compound sentence she produces in her narrative contributions is of type 3, where the two clauses are firmly linked by a conjunction as she says in unison with her mother.

They pulled and pulled with all their might
and this time they did pull up the enormous turnip.

Anna ET75

This detailed examination of the major sentences shows us something very important. Anna's mother appears to be initiating her into a form of language which retains many of the features of the printed text that enable it to carry its ideational load, but is nonetheless shifted in the direction of conversational forms where these do not interfere with the meaning. For intonation, absent of course from the printed word, can be brought to bear to establish and reinforce connections that in written language must be made through lexis and syntax alone. Thus the ideational weight is spread between the new vehicle of unfamiliar syntactic structures and the familiar vehicle of intonation.

4.1.2.1.5

Types of minor sentence

When we turn to the minor sentences we see a similar pattern. I have divided these into the four types proposed by Crystal and Davy: the first type is dependent finite clauses, such as

'cos he's gone in the hay

Anna RW25

The second type is non-finite clauses such as

Jumping up and down

Mother WT45

The third type consists of those phrases containing two or more elements of the SPCA structure, but lacking the combination of subject and predicator necessary to qualify a freestanding sentence for major status. An example is

Think he's going out

Anna RW39

The fourth type consists of a single one of these SPCA elements, for example the adverbial, as in this sentence

At Christmas time

Mother LRH26

Table 9.13 shows the distribution of these different types of minor sentences in the conversation, spoken narrative and printed narrative.

Table 9.13

Distribution of types of minor sentence

		Conversation			Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of Minor sentences	RW	9	3	6	8	0	8	1
	WT	6	4	2	21	0	21	1
	ET	4	2	2	3	0	3	1
	LRH	8	4	4	2	0	2	1
	Total	27	13	14	34	0	34	4
Type 1 Dependent Finite	RW	4	2	2	0			0
	WT	1	0	1	4	0	4	1
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	2	0	2	0			0
	Total	7	2	5	4	0	4	1
Type 2 Non-finite	RW	1	0	1	0			0
	WT	1	0	1	0			0
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	0			0			0
	Total	2	0	2	0			0
Type 3 containing two or more SPCA elements	RW	3	1	2	1	0	1	0
	WT	2	2	0	7	0	7	0
	ET	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
	LRH	5	4	1	0			0
	Total	11	8	3	9	0	9	0
Type 4 containing single SPCA elements	RW	1	0	1	7	0	7	1
	WT	2	2	0	10	0	10	0
	ET	3	1	2	2	0	2	1
	LRH	1	0	1	2	0	2	1
	Total	7	3	4	21	0	21	3

As noted earlier the four minor sentences of the printed narratives all represent titles and in three cases take the conventional form of noun phrases. The fourth, Where the Wild Things

Are takes the unusual form of a subordinate finite clause.

In sharp contrast, the conversation (which, of course, contains a higher proportion of minor sentences overall) contains a much higher incidence of minor type 4 and minor type 1 sentences. It also contains two minor type 2 sentences. But most are of the minor type 3 category, containing 2 or more elements of the SPCA structure, but not those that would qualify them for major status.

Once more the spoken narrative lies between these two extremes. As noted earlier, there is a much greater incidence of minor sentences than in the printed narrative. Some of these are of minor type 1, rather more are of minor type 3, but the greatest proportion are of minor type 4.

What do these differences mean? The minor type 3 structures that occur so frequently in their conversation are largely the realization of the particular kind of inexplicitness noted at the semantic level. Mother and child know the topic of each others' utterances, but not what each has to say about the topic. In a sentence such as

Looks like that, don't you know, don't you think so

Mother RW37

there is no communicative need to supply the subject and this type of minor structure is a recognition of this lack of communicative need.

A few of Anna's minor type 3 sentences appear to take this form simply because of her linguistic immaturity.

Why they naughty?

Anna LRH35

is of this sort. Her mother would probably pose the question as a major sentence. The minor type 1 sentences such as

'cos he's gone in the hay

Anna RW25

are nearly all elliptical (but nonetheless explicit) answers to questions posed, or extensions of another's previous utterance or more seldom, extensions or afterthoughts to the speaker's own previous utterance, as is the case in RW49 quoted earlier.

The much greater incidence of minor sentences in the spoken than in the written narrative, follows the pattern noted in the distribution of different types of compound sentences. Anna's mother is splitting up major sentences into structurally simpler parts without losing either the experiential content or the logical relationship. In Where the Wild Things Are she splits up the printed sentences of compound types 3 and 4 into a number of simple major sentences and a variety of minor sentences so that, for example

That very night in Max's room a forest
grew and grew -
and grew until his ceiling hung with vines
and the walls became the world all around
and an ocean tumbled by with a private boat for Max
and he sailed off through night and day
and in and out of weeks
and almost over a year
to where the wild things are.

Printed narrative WT3

becomes, in the reading, 11 separate utterances, interspersed with language-like noises from Anna.

In Rosie's Walk every adverbial group describing her route, is read as a separate utterance and again these are interspersed with contributions from Anna, which this time take the form of verbal conversation.

In looking at the overall structure of the sentences we have seen how Anna's mother breaks the text up into smaller, more manageable

chunks closer to spoken language, or, more rarely, runs sequence of printed sentences together to make the kind of loosely structured co-ordinated sentence that is typical of oral language. As we turn now to look at group structure the pattern changes. Here the spoken narrative has not been shifted to lie midway between the printed narrative and the accompanying conversation, but is much closer to the original printed narrative. Anna's mother puts her own stamp on the phrasing, but does not take liberties with the phrases. By and large the words remain those the author wrote.

4.1.2.2

Types of group structure

While an examination of sentence structure has revealed marked differences between the narrative and conversational utterances, the realization of their ideational differences is not shown fully until the structure and distribution of their nominal, verbal and adverbial groups is examined.

4.1.2.2.1

Incidence and structure of nominal groups

The first point to note is simply that there is a much higher density of nominal groups in the spoken narrative than in the conversation. In the spoken narrative the ratio of nominal groups to whole utterances ranges between .9:1 and 1.8:1 in the four story tellings. In the accompanying conversation the range is between .29:1 and .51:1. Taking all the spoken narrative utterances together, the ratio is 1.5:1, but taking all the conversational utterances together the ratio is only .42:1. If Anna's utterances are taken on their own

the contrast remains. The ratio for her narrative utterances is 1.1:1, but for her conversational utterances only .25:1. Mother and child are producing more than three times as many nominal groups in their narrative utterances as in their conversational utterances.

Not only is the incidence of nominal groups different, but so also is their structure. As table 9.14 shows, if we discount as modifiers the determiners 'a', 'an' and 'the', 65% of the narrative nominal groups are modified, but the figure falls to 28% for the conversational nominal groups. In the narrative nominal groups modification is achieved in three ways. Most are pre-modified, a much smaller number are post-modified and a very small number (8 in all) are both pre and post-modified. In the conversational nominal groups all modification is pre-modification.

Nor does this tell us all about the structure of the narrative nominal groups. In several of these one group is embedded inside another, so that we have 'some rows of turnip seeds' (ET 8), 'the other animals in the farmyard' (LRH8) and 'King of all wild things' (WT41). Some are more complex still with finite or non-finite clauses embedded in the post-modification as in 'plenty of it left for dinner the next day' (ET115), 'the place where the wild things are' (WT37) and 'the magic trick of staring into all their yellow eyes without blinking once' (WT 39). In this final example the embedded element is itself a hypotactic construction, containing two non finite clauses—complexity indeed!

While Anna does not rise to producing any post-modification herself, she does produce a number of pre-modified nominal groups, indeed 71% of her narrative nominal groups are pre-modified as against only 20% of her conversational nominal groups, again reflecting the

prevailing pattern.

There is, of course, a functional reason for these differences in distribution and structure: the variation in informational density between conversation and narrative is very largely realized by these means. Where mother and daughter are concerned to communicate to each other on familiar topics in a shared physical context, much can go unsaid, much need not be specified. But in order to create the informational density and explicitness of a narrative construct, a far greater degree of specificity is needed. Anna shows that she is gaining control over the forms which bring this about, although she has yet to show mastery of the most complex.

Table 9.14

Distribution of nominal groups with proper noun or common noun as head
word

		Conversation			Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of admissible nominal groups	RW	20	9	11	10	0	10	10
	WT	10	3	7	51	0	51	53
	ET	10	8	2	153	32	121	124
	LRH	15	5	10	88	6	82	78
	Total	55	25	30	302	38	264	265
Unmodified*	RW	17	9	8	8	0	8	8
	WT	6	1	5	17	0	17	17
	ET	9	8	1	28	6	22	20
	LRH	8	2	6	55	5	50	51
	Total	40	20	20	108	11	97	96
Pre-modified	RW	3	0	3	1	0	1	1
	WT	4	2	2	22	0	22	24
	ET	1	0	1	119	26	93	98
	LRH	7	3	4	24	1	23	19
	Total	15	5	10	166	27	139	142
Post-modified	RW	0			1	0	1	1
	WT	0			8	0	8	8
	ET	0			6	0	6	6
	LRH	0			5	0	5	4
	Total	0			20	0	20	19
Pre & Post modified	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			4	0	4	4
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	0			4	0	4	4
	Total	0			8	0	8	8

*excluding determiners 'a', 'an' and 'the'

The few alterations Anna's mother makes to the nominal groups in the printed texts are of three kinds: omission, repetition and insertion. From the title of The Little Red Hen she omits the unusual addition 'and the grains of wheat' and in Where the Wild Things Are, on one occasion she omits the gnashing of the monsters' terrible teeth and the rolling of their terrible eyes. She sometimes repeats a narrative utterance, including one or more nominal groups, to pick up the narrative thread again when conversation has intervened. And she expands 'the grains' to 'the grains of wheat' in one utterance in The Little Red Hen. But apart from these very minor deviations, the nominal groups in the spoken narrative are identical with those in the printed texts.

4.1.2.2.2

Incidence and structure of finite verbal groups

The contrasts between the verbal groups in the narrative and those in the conversation are rather less clearcut. They are real, but subtler than the contrasts between the nominal groups. The first point to note is that in the narrative utterances there is a narrower, not wider range of tenses than in the surrounding conversation. Only four tenses are used in the narrative - the past, the present, the future and the past in past, or pluperfect. However, in the conversation in addition to these four, three others are also used, the past in present, the present in present and the future in present, all of which Anna uses at least once. This distribution is shown in Table 9.15 below.

Table 9.15

Tenses of indicative verbal groups

	Conversation				Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of indicative verbal groups	RW	34	12	22	2	0	2	2
	WT	26	10	16	47	0	47	48
	ET	18	12	6	126	26	100	99
	LRH	34	16	18	67	3	64	65
	Total	112	50	62	242	29	213	214
Past	RW	0			2	0	2	2
	WT	1	0	1	40	0	40	41
	ET	2	2	0	125	26	99	98
	LRH	3	2	1	49	1	48	48
	Total	6	4	2	216	27	189	189
Present	RW	25	7	18	0			0
	WT	20	9	11	5	0	5	5
	ET	14	9	5	0			0
	LRH	27	11	16	1	0	1	2
	Total	86	38	48	4	0	4	7
Future	RW	3	0	3	0			0
	WT	1	0	1	2	0	2	2
	ET	1	1	0	0			0
	LRH	1	1	0	16	2	14	14
	Total	6	2	4	12	1	11	16
Past in Past	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			0			0
	ET	0			1	0	1	1
	LRH	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
	Total	1	0	1	2	0	2	2
Past in Present	RW	1	1	0				
	WT	1	0	1				
	ET	0						
	LRH	0						
	Total	2	1	1				
Present in Present	RW	4	4	0				
	WT	3	1	2				
	ET	1	0	1				
	LRH	1	1	0				
	Total	9	6	3				

	LRH	1	1	0	16	2	14	14
	Total	6	2	4	12	1	11	16
Past in Past	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			0			0
	ET	0			1	0	1	1
	LRH	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
	Total	1	0	1	2	0	2	2
Past in Present	RW	1	1	0				
	WT	1	0	1				
	ET	0						
	LRH	0						
	Total	2	1	1				
Present in Present	RW	4	4	0				
	WT	3	1	2				
	ET	1	0	1				
	LRH	1	1	0				
	Total	9	6	3				
Future in Present	RW	1	0	1				
	WT	0						
	ET	0						
	LRH	1	1	0				
	Total	2	1	1				

The reason for the narrower range of tenses in the narrative utterances is that the narrative is all told from a particular vantage point after the event, relieved only by the narrated dialogue in which .the speakers talk of their concerns in the present and the future. However in their own conversation, Anna and her mother range more widely. The three additional tenses they use are the tenses we all use when we are dwelling for the moment in the present. As they explore the pictures, Anna and her mother consider past and future but only in so far as these result in or are foreshadowed by the present. It is not surprising that most of these forms appear in the conversations surrounding the readings of the two picture books.

The second point to note is that there is a less extensive and far less varied use of modulation in the narrative than in the conversation. It is true that in The Enormous Turnip there are seven modulated verb forms, but these are all of the same type, all 'could not' or 'couldn't'. However, in their conversation Anna and her mother use fifteen modulated forms of seven different types. Anna produces six of these types herself. The distribution is shown in Table 9.16 below.

Table 9.16

Types of modulation in conversational utterances

Story		Type of modulation						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RW	Both				2	1		
	Anna				1	1		
	Mother				1	0		
WT	Both		1	1	2			3
	Anna		0	1	1			3
	Mother		1	0	2			0
ET	Both	1		2				
	Anna	1		1				
	Mother	0		1				
LRH	Both						1	1
	Anna						1	1
	Mother						0	0

Key to types of modulation

- 1 neutral, positive, willing, active (will)
- 2 oblique, positive, willing, active (would)
- 3 neutral, positive, able, active (can)
- 4 neutral, negative, able, active (can't)
- 5 oblique, positive, able, active (could)
- 6 oblique, negative, obliged/supposed, passive (shouldn't)
- 7 neutral, positive, required, passive (must)

Of course there is a reason for this variation. Modulation has a place in The Enormous Turnip because the story concerns the ability of the characters to pull up the turnip. But the other stories have other concerns in which inclination, ability, permission, obligation and compulsion, the meanings realized by modulation, have little overt part to play. However Anna takes these matters seriously and she talks about what she can and can't do and what she wants to do, extending such concerns to the characters in the story. The three year old's desire for autonomy and the parents' desire for a degree of order and constraint underlie the frequent use of these forms in conversational utterances.

4.1.2.2.3

Distribution of non finite verb forms

When we turn to the non-finite verb forms, the pattern of distribution seems very similar to that of the nominal groups. There is a markedly greater density in the spoken narrative than in the conversation, hardly differing from that of the written narrative.

Table 9.17

Distribution of non-finite verb forms

		Conversation			Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
		Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of non-finite verbal forms	RW	5	1	4	0			0
	WT	1	0	1	6	0	6	6
	ET	1	0	1	23	0	23	21
	LRH	1	0	1	14	0	14	13
	Total	8	1	7	43	0	43	40
Infinitive Present Active	RW	4	1	3	0			0
	WT	0			1			0
	ET	1	0	1	22	0	22	20
	LRH	1	0	1	7	0	7	6
	Total	6	1	5	30	0	30	27
Infinitive Present Passive	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			0			0
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	0			5	0	5	5
	Total	0			5			5
Participle Present Active	RW	0			0			0
	WT	1	0	1	4	0	4	4
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	0			1	0	1	1
	Total	1	0	1	5	0	5	5
Participle Past Active	RW	1	0	1	0			0
	WT	0			0			0
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	0			0			0
	Total	1	0	1	0			0
Participle Past Passive	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			1	0	1	1
	ET	0			1	0	1	1
	LRH	0			1	0	1	1
	Total	0			3	0	3	3

Again these forms contribute to a density of information, but in this case there is a logical element allied to the experiential as these non-finite forms are often used to create non-finite clauses of some complexity standing in precise relationship to finite clauses, for example

And tamed them with the magic trick of staring
into all their yellow eyes without blinking once.

Mother WT39

and

So the old man called to his wife to
come and help him to pull up the
enormous turnip.

Mother ET29

The relationship between most of these verb forms is hypotactic rather than paratactic, making a construction of some depth and complexity. It is hardly surprising that Anna produces very few of these structures in her conversation and none at all in her contributions to the narrative. Her mother makes some effort to reduce their density or make their structure more apparent by inserting pronouns and the infinitive marker 'to' where infinitives are concerned, as in ET29 cited above. By expanding the elliptical form she clarifies the relationship of the participants and the status of the verb. Again she is making more accessible the unfamiliar forms of the printed text.

4.1.2.2.4

Distribution of adverbial groups

The distribution of adverbial groups is similar to that of the nominal groups and non-finite verb forms. There are many more in the spoken narrative, as is shown in Table 9.18 below. Again Anna's

mother varies the text in front of her only where she repeats an earlier sentence after conversation has intervened or, in one instance substitutes a more familiar preposition. In their conversation the only time when there is extensive use made of adverbials, is when her mother is explaining a puzzling feature in a picture by referring to Anna's past experience of going into the attic. And of the nine adverbials Anna produces in conversation, four are inexplicit and dependent on the physical context.

Table 9.18

Distribution of adverbial groups

	Conversation				Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of adverbial groups	RW	6	3	3	8	0	8	8
	WT	6	1	5	23	0	23	23
	ET	2	2	0	49	7	42	47
	LRH	10	3	7	33	0	33	32
	Total	24	9	15	113	7	106	110
Adverbial groups of time	RW	1	0	1	0			0
	WT	2	1	1	7	0	7	7
	ET	0			17	0	17	19
	LRH	0			5	0	5	5
	Total	3	1	2	29	0	29	31
Adverbial groups of place	RW	5	3	2	7	0	7	7
	WT	3	0	3	11	0	11	11
	ET	1	1	0	15	4	11	13
	LRH	10	3	7	16	0	16	16
	Total	19	7	12	49	4	45	47
Adverbial groups of manner	RW	0			0			0
	WT	1	0	1	5	0	5	5
	ET	1	1	0	13	2	11	11
	LRH	0			6	0	6	5
	Total	2	1	1	24	2	22	21
Adverbial groups of purpose	RW	0			1	0	1	1
	WT	0			0			0
	ET	0			4	1	3	4
	LRH	0			6	0	6	6
	Total	0			11	1	10	11

4.1.3

Summary of features of transitivity

In looking at all these features we have seen different tools being used for different purposes. In their conversation Anna and her mother use a wider variety of tenses and modulated verbs than appears in the narrative utterances. But in respect of all the other features there is greater variety in the narrative utterances. To achieve the high particularity of the printed narratives, Anna's mother uses a wider lexis, more complex sentence structures, a greater number of nominal groups of greater complexity, a greater variety of non-finite verb forms and a greater number of adverbial groups than she does in conversation. But some of these strange features she softens for Anna. With one exception she leaves the lexis to look after itself, as if assuming that Anna will either work out what the words mean or remain untroubled by not knowing. But through her use of intonation she alters the sentence structures to bring them closer to those of conversation and also conveys the logical relationships within the printed sentences. The structures below the level of the sentence she leaves largely unaltered, but again she uses intonation to indicate their boundaries and internal structure. Anna is clearly being initiated into the unfamiliar forms necessary to realize the dense, explicit and complex ideational meanings of the written word.

4.2

Mood

The preceding section has shown contrast in terms of density, variety and degree of complexity in the features of transitivity, realizing the ideational contrast between narrative and conversation.

We now turn to the forms that are used to realize the interpersonal meanings and here too the semantic examination indicates that the contrast will be marked, but in favour (if variety and complexity are favoured) of the conversational utterances.

4.2.1

Choices within the mood system of the verbs

As table 9.19 shows, of the 246 finite verb forms in the narrative utterances, all but ten are declarative. And these ten exceptions, six interrogatives and four imperatives, all occur in the narrative dialogue as the characters speak to each other. Anna's mother, speaking for the author, is addressing Anna in unrelievedly declarative mood. To change this would, of course, fundamentally alter the relation between author and reader/listener. This Anna's mother chooses not to do. But in their conversation 15 of the mother's utterances, nearly a quarter of the total of 64, are interrogative or imperative. For Anna the proportion is even higher - 20 out of a total of 52. This is of course a realization of the different roles that colour the conversation.

Table 9.19

Distribution of choices within the mood system

	Conversation				Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of finite verb forms	RW	36	12	24	2	0	2	2
	WT	26	10	16	51	0	51	52
	ET	20	14	6	126	26	100	99
	LRH	34	16	18	67	3	64	65
	Total	116	52	64	246	29	217	218
Declarative	RW	25	8	17	2	0	2	2
	WT	19	8	11	47	0	47	48
	ET	13	8	5	126	26	100	99
	LRH	24	8	16	61	3	58	60
	Total	81	32	49	236	29	207	209
Interrogative	RW	9	4	5	0			0
	WT	7	2	5	0			0
	ET	5	4	1	0			0
	LRH	10	8	2	6	0	6	5
	Total	31	18	13	6	0	6	5
Imperative Jussive a	RW	2	0	2	0			0
	WT	0			0			0
	ET	2	2	0	0			0
	LRH	0			0			0
	Total	4	2	2	0			0
Imperative Jussive b	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			3	0	3	3
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	0			0			0
	Total	0			3	0	3	3
Imperative Optative	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			1	0	1	1
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	0			0			0
	Total	0			1	0	1	1

4.2.2

The use of contracted and marked uncontracted forms

In the printed narrative, as Table 9.20 shows, only three contracted forms appear, all in the narrative dialogue of Where the Wild Things Are. Although this text contains no marked uncontracted forms, Rosie's Walk includes 'around' (which at this date sounds rather more formal than the more usual 'round'), The Enormous Turnip includes seven 'could not's and The Little Red Hen ten uncontracted 'will's and 'shall's. In the telling one 'could not' is contracted to 'couldn't' and two 'who will's become 'who'll', but otherwise Anna's mother retains these indicators of formality. Indeed Anna herself shows a familiarity with these forms by contributing two to the narration of The Little Red Hen, only one of which appears in the printed text.

"I will" said the fox

Anna LRH53

"No, no, no, no you will not!"

Anna LRH76

In their conversation, of course, the picture is very different. Both mother and child make liberal use of contracted forms through which they realize the interpersonal closeness noted at the semantic level. As well as the more usual forms such as 'it's' and 'isn't', the 69 conversational contractions include 'because' contracted to ''cos', 'those have' contracted to 'thos've' and 'yours has' contracted to 'yours's'. However this contrast should not be over emphasised. Very many of the conversational contractions involve the present in present tense or the present tense of 'to be' or 'to have'. If the tenses

were those of the printed narrative there would be fewer opportunities for contraction. Whereas 'he is jumping' can be contracted, 'he was jumping' and 'he jumped' cannot. Nonetheless the presence of the contractions in the conversation conveys something of the informality of the relationship between mother and child.

Table 9.20

Distribution of marked uncontracted and contracted forms

	Conversation				Spoken Narrative			Written Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Marked uncontracted forms	RW	0						
	WT	0						
	ET	0			6	0	6	7
	LRH	0			10*	2*	8*	10*
	Total	0			16	2	14	1
Contracted forms	RW	19	5	14	0			0
	WT	15	5	10	3*	0	3*	3*
	ET	9	7	2	1	0	1	0
	LRH	26	13	13	2*	0	2*	0
	Total	69	30	39	6	0	6	3

*In narrative dialogue

4.2.3

The use of lexis to realize mood

A further degree of intimacy is added by their use of certain words. Anna's mother calls Rosie's follower a 'silly old fox', talks of hens in cages being 'nice and safe' terminates this reading with

'Bye bye Rosie' and announces 'Mummy's suppertime now'. Anna calls the cat in The Enormous Turnip a 'pussycat'. The one act of lexical softening of the printed narrative occurs when both change the 'tiny mouse' of the printed text to a 'teeny wee mouse'.

4.2.3

Summary of features of mood

One point to note is the absence of modal auxiliaries and adverbs from both conversation and narrative. Tentativeness towards the propositional content of their utterances has apparently no part to play in these story readings, either in the narrative or in the conversation. But in the features that realize the inter-personal content, there is a clear and constant distinction between the two sets of utterances realizing a uniformly declarative formality in the narrative and a far more varied informality with hints of intimacy in the conversation.

4.3

Theme

I will treat first the features of theme that realize functional sentence perspective and then move on to examine the use of cohesive devices.

4.3.1

The use of Voice

Unsurprisingly there is little use of the passive voice in these story readings. Max 'was sent to bed' in both printed and spoken versions of Where the Wild Things Are, the recipient of his mother's

justified annoyance. In The Little Red Hen the focus is on the grains of wheat and so the processes by which they are converted into bread are explicated through one finite and five infinitive passive forms. However, Anna is more interested in the various active participants and in the unhelpfulness of the other farmyard animals than in the planting, cutting, grinding and baking of the wheat, so in their conversation mother and child make no use of the passive and little use of intonation to draw attention away from the agent in the subject slot.

4.3.2

Variations from canonical word, group and clause order

The relative density of subordination in the narrative utterances compared to the conversational utterances has already been noted in Section 4.1. But the ordering of these clauses and of the groups and words within clauses, is also worth noting. As Table 9.21 shows, whereas in the conversational utterances there are only two examples of non-canonical order, there are 40 in the printed narrative, which, through repetition rise to 43 in the spoken narrative. In all the texts except Rosie's Walk adverbial clauses or groups are preposed before the subject. In Where the Wild Things Are, when Max talks, the complement is preposed before the subject. In The Little Red Hen the usual order of subject, predicator and complement is reversed in all the narrative dialogue, in a form which Anna has clearly mastered since she contributes her own

"I will" said the fox

Anna LRH53

Table 9.21

Distribution of major sentences deviating from canonical word order

	Conversation				Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Total of non-canonical structures	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			6	0	6	6
	ET	0			4	0	4	4
	LRH	2	1	1	33	1	32	30
	Total	2	1	1	43	1	42	40
ASP	RW				0			0
	WT				4	0	4	4
	ET				4	0	4	4
	LRH	2	1	1	5	0	5	5
	Total	2	1	1	13	0	13	13
CSP	RW				0			0
	WT				2	0	2	2
	ET				0			0
	LRH	0			0			0
	Total	0			2	0	2	2
CPS	RW				0			0
	WT				0			0
	ET				0			0
	LRH	0			28	1	27	25
	Total	0			28	1	27	25

4.33

The use of cohesive devices

It is difficult to give any precise figures for lexical cohesion since collocation is not indisputably definable. But it should be noted that the high concentration in the narrative of nominal groups and of unusual words in all classes as noted in Section 4.1, has its

own patterning. In Rosie's Walk and The Little Red Hen the texts, both spoken and printed, are held together partly through the vocabulary of a semi-mechanised rural life. In The Enormous Turnip the vocabulary is unmechanised rural. But in Where the Wild Things Are it is of monsters, fear and shows of power. Where the conversation is story-related, the more thinly distributed nouns and lexical verbs of the conversation reflect something of this patterning.

The other cohesive devices are more easily counted, but reference remains slightly problematic. Because it is not always clear in their conversation whether the referential item refers anaphorically to what has gone before, or exophorically to elements in the pictures, I have created a special category to cover such cases and assigned 9 items to it. But in the vast majority of cases the reference is clear and the resulting contrast between conversation and narrative is sharp, as Table 9.22 shows. If we include the referential items in the narrative dialogue that refer exophorically as far as the characters are concerned but anaphorically for the reader/listener, there are 285 referential items in the printed narrative as against 57 in the conversation. In the spoken narrative the figure rises to 323, a rise largely accounted for by repetition.

Very little use is made of substitution either in the narrative or in the conversation, but with inter-sentential ellipsis and conjunction, the contrast between narrative and conversation is again sharp. The conversation includes no such ellipsis and only three such conjunctions, whereas the printed narrative includes ten examples of cohesive ellipsis and 29 of cohesive conjunctions. In the spoken narrative these figures rise to 19 and 61 respectively. This is

explained quite simply by the mother's division of the printed sentences into larger numbers of spoken utterances so that conjunctions and elliptical forms with an intra-sentential function in the printed text, become cohesive devices in the spoken narrative.

Table 9.22

Distribution of cohesive devices

	Conversation				Spoken Narrative			Written Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
	RW	37	14	23	0			0
	WT	6	1	5	85	0	85	60
	ET	5	3	2	199	33	166	150
	LRH	19	7	12	122	4	118	118
	Total	67	25	42	406	37	369	328
Endophoric reference (excluding narrative dialogue)	RW	35	14	21	0			
	WT	1	0	1	46	0	46	48
	ET	5	3	2	169	29	140	133
	LRH	16	5	11	55	1	54	55
	Total	57	22	35	270	30	240	236
Reference in narrative dialogue	RW				0			0
	WT				8	0	8	8
	ET				0			0
	LRH				45	2	43	41
	Total				53	2	51	49
Substitution	RW	1	0	1	0			0
	WT	5	1	4	0			0
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	1	0	1	3	0	3	4
	Total	7	1	6	3	0	3	4
Ellipsis	RW	0			0			0
	WT	0			6	0	6	0
	ET	0			0			0
	LRH	0			13	1	12	10
	Total				19	1	18	10
Conjunctions	RW	1	0	1	0			0
	WT	0			25	0	25	4
	ET	0			30	4	26	17
	LRH	2	2	0	6	0	6	8
	Total	3	2	1	61	4	57	29

When we turn to exophoric reference, besides the nine ambiguous items referred to above, there are, as one would expect and as table 9.23 shows, very many more exophoric items in the conversation than in the narrative. However the few exophoric references in the narrative are interesting. They are all identical in the printed and spoken narrative and all involve the word 'the', used to indicate that the following word denotes a person, object or event that can be inferred from the linguistic context and the shared knowledge between writer and reader/listener. So Rosie walks round 'the' pond, 'the' walls in Max's bedroom become the world all around, the old man grasps the turnip in 'the' proper way and 'the' miller grinds the wheat for the little red hen. None of these texts is completely independent of context, as no text can be.

But, with the possible exception of Rosie's Walk, there is certainly much more cohesion within each printed text than there is within the conversation. In Rosie's Walk, of course, the pictures tell more of the story than does the narrative. For this reason, from Anna's

A fox is following her

Anna RW5

much of the accompanying conversation explicates the sequence of events of the pictures, and so in its use of anaphoric reference comes closer to the narrative than do the conversations accompanying the other story readings. In the other three story readings the contrast is sharp. The conversational utterances are not without cohesive ties binding them to each other and to the utterances of the narrative. But they are also tethered firmly to the non-linguistic context, to the shared experience of 'last time' to the chocolate coins in Anna's

lap and to the features in the pictures which pointing or line of gaze show to be the object of attention. However, apart from the reference to a shared general knowledge of the world, the narratives contain no exophoric references. Instead they are traversed by a web of connecting devices binding the separate sentences or utterances tightly together into cohesive wholes.

The distribution of exophoric reference is shown in Table 9.23.

Table 9.23

Distribution of exophoric reference and reference with unclear status

	Conversation				Spoken Narrative			Printed Narrative
	Story	Both	Anna	Mother	Both	Anna	Mother	
Reference status unclear	RW	0						
	WT	1	1	0				
	ET	6	2	4				
	LRH	2	2	0				
	Total	9	5	4				
Exophoric reference	RW	5	4	1	6	0	6	
	WT	31	11	20	3	0	3	
	ET	14	11	3	2	0	2	
	LRH	32	16	16	2	0	2	
	Total	82	42	40	13	0	13	

4.3.4

Summary of features of theme

Apart from Rosie's Walk all three narratives are composed of

utterances with a crisply stated FSP, realized very occasionally through the passive voice and more usually through the ordering of the components of the sentence. These utterances cohere with each other principally through the use of lexis, reference, ellipsis and conjunctions. Their FSP and cohesion are not reduced in the telling : their internal shape and their interweaving survive the conversational interludes. By contrast the conversational utterances carry no unusual emphasis and are tied more to the extra-linguistic context than they are to each other.

4.4

Summary of the features of structural configurations

The different meanings noted at the level of semantics are undeniably realized by very different linguistic forms. If we take the conversational utterances of Anna and her mother to be typical of their conversation in general (and certainly they conform in very close detail to the features noted in Chapter 5 as typical of the conversational experience of pre-school children) then the narrative utterances are quite remarkable. They differ in almost every category examined from the conversational utterances. They are simply not the forms of oral language written down, but a different variety, shaped to a different purpose.

To those with experience of being read to as children and of reading to other children in turn, the narrative utterances may seem familiar enough. To adults with a wide literary experience they may seem mundane. The language of the two folk tales is certainly less densely resonant and informative, and in all the texts the sentences are less complex and less subtly patterned than those of Grimm's Fairy

Tales, Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit or Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose (Grimm 188?, Potter 1902, Eco 1980). But the comparative simplicity of these sentences should not overshadow the fact of their difference from conversation. They contain, in simpler form, nearly all the elements and devices of literary language. Anna is certainly being initiated from a total reliance on utterance into the state of being able to make sense of the forms of written text.

She is still very much the junior partner, the novice or apprentice only beginning to learn the forms and meanings of written language. Her contributions to the narrative utterances are few. Although in these narrative contributions and in her conversation she makes use of a wide variety of complex forms, this use is understandably slighter and less confident than her mother's. Anna uses fewer adverbial groups, a smaller proportion of modified nominal groups and a smaller proportion of complex sentences than her mother. Anna's utterances also have a simpler thematic structure and are less tightly bound together as she makes slighter use of endophoric reference. At three years old Anna is a novice in all these forms, forms that are widely used in narrative to realize the ideational and textual meanings.

However there is an area where she shows a more confident command - the inter-personal. In these story readings Anna ranges over all the moods of the verb and shows confident use of marked uncontracted forms as well as the contracted forms of conversation. She uses both the intimate lexis of the home and the formal lexis of the narrative. And in her conversation she uses a considerably wider range of forms of modulation than her mother. Halliday sees modulation as clearly ideational in function since it expresses factual conditions on the

process expressed in the clause (Halliday 1976). But these factual conditions are themselves of an interpersonal nature. For Anna, learning the language of books means expanding her command of the forms of transitivity and theme, but learning few new forms of mood, and drawing on only a limited set of those she is already familiar with.

Analysis of discourse structure

My argument thus far has been that these story readings are distinctive precisely in the intermingling of the forms, meanings and situational features of different discourses. Taken separately the sentences of the printed narrative, the utterances of the spoken narrative, and those of the accompanying conversation have been shown to differ markedly in a number of significant ways. So in examining their discourse structure the logic indicates that I should explore the structuring of the sets of narrative utterances separately from the structuring of the sets of conversational utterances.

There is however, an important problem in this approach. While an examination of the narrative texts alone (whether in the mother's words or in those of the printed book) can reveal the potential structures of the narratives, it cannot tell us how these are actualized for Anna. Paradoxically the conversational utterances provide the only evidence for this. So this examination has three parts - the potential structures of the four narratives, the structures of the accompanying conversation and the role of the accompanying conversation in shaping and revealing the structure Anna gives to the narratives.

5.1

The potential structures of the four narratives

What follows is an examination of the four narratives from the point of view of an informed adult reader, familiar with a wide variety of fiction written for children and adults. I use the framework established in Chapter 4 and therefore begin with the 'story

grammar' of these narratives.

5.1.1

Story grammar

Although the model sits rather uneasily on Where the Wild Things Are, all four narratives can be construed as well formed stories in terms of Beaugrande and Colby's sets of rules (Beaugrande and Colby 1979). All have a central character, a problem state, a goal state, a pathway from one to the other, an obstacle blocking the central character's progress along this pathway, a turning point and a marked terminal state. In addition the fox in Rosie's Walk and the other farmyard animals in The Little Red Hen function as antagonists whose actions (or inaction) are attempts to prevent the central character from achieving the goal state, and therefore these narratives exemplify Beaugrande and Colby's second rule set. But Where the Wild Things Are does not fit so neatly into either set. There is something very reductionist and mechanical about classifying Max's journey over the ocean and back, and his adventure with the wild things as merely a pathway from the problem state of his mother's rejection to the goal state of her acceptance. Perhaps it is because Max's problem is essentially psychological in contrast to the very physical problems in the other narratives and in the folk tales examined by Beaugrande and Colby.

Despite the fact that Anna, in common with countless other children, finds them so, it is not entirely clear either whether all four stories should be classed as interesting in Beaugrande & Colby's terms, for the alternative possibilities they contain are in some cases limited. Max might have stayed with the wild things in the tent

provided for him, or he might have been eaten up by them, just as Rosie might have been eaten by the fox. But The Little Red Hen and The Enormous Turnip offer fewer possibilities. The wheat might never have been cut and the turnip might have remained in the ground, but these alternatives hardly seem the major source of interest.

5.1.2

Todorov's conception of narrative structure

To explore what makes these stories interesting to Anna and to understand their structure more fully we have to move well beyond story grammar. Todorov's conception of narrative structure provides some useful illumination. Taking genre first, we can classify three of them as belonging to the genre of the twentieth century children's folk tale. Two are actual re-tellings of folk tales, and another, Rosie's Walk, is a modern composition in the same genre.

Both Rosie's Walk and Where the Wild Things Are belong also to the genre of the twentieth century children's picture book. In both books the pictures are far more than a decorative accompaniment to the printed text. Without the pictures there would be no threat to Rosie and the narration of Max's adventures would be densely indigestible.

Where the Wild Things Are is also a member of a rather newer genre - the children's psychological drama - in which characters and their relationships are more subject to change than they are in the folk tale. Max's mother shifts from being the rejecting figure at the beginning to the accepting figure at the end, while Max himself journeys from anger through separation and triumph to re-integration.

Todorov observes that individual works can change genres and certainly this book has changed the genre of which it is a member,

moving it to a more open treatment of children's emotional wars. The publication of Angry Arthur in which the central character's rage destroys the universe, is a further move in the same direction (Oram 1982).

All these genres are shaped by the wider culture of the twentieth century. But the rural world of the three children's folk tales is rather different from the realities of today's agricultural industry. It is neat and peopled with talking animals who are consistently either benign, indifferent or malevolent. No modern agricultural machinery intrudes and although the old man in The Enormous Turnip wears rubber Wellingtons, there is no suggestion in any of these books of rural bus services, Sainsbury's or the Egg Marketing Board. Such sanitised, de-mechanised and anthropomorphised versions of a rural past are what the wider culture deems to be suitable narrative material for young children. The modern world is perhaps too complex, threatening and uncertain. All these folk tales have happy and moralistic endings: the innocent and hard working are vindicated and the malevolent and lazy meet a suitable fate. In this they differ from their earlier forms. In most of Grimm's Tales it is cunning not virtue that is rewarded, sometimes to a marked degree, as in The Royal Turnip where an innocent scholar who has helped the central character is left strung up in a sack (Grimm 189?).

Where the Wild Things Are is shaped by rather different cultural influences such as the overt post Freudian recognition of the primal force of young children's emotions and the need not to deny their existence, but to work through them to resolution. However there is an unmechanised quality about this world too: although Max has a wire coathanger in his bedroom, his boat has a sail, not an outboard motor.

Despite their different genres and despite the absence of superficially recognisable features of modern life, all these are definitely twentieth century texts. They are folk tales and modern creations shaped to views of childhood which differ from those of earlier centuries. And their counterparts a hundred years from now will undoubtedly differ in their turn.

Each of these stories can be summarised in ways that would not violate their story content or grammar as revealed by the application of the model of Beaugrande and Colby. But of course such a summary would be an impoverishment, for as Todorov emphasises, the discours or narrative is also significant. In Rosie's Walk the 32 word narrative appears very simple, but it would be distinctly reduced by a story summary that included the events in the pictures. It is the nonchalant unawareness of the telling in the face of the ever-present threat in the pictures that gives the whole its particular savour. In The Enormous Turnip and The Little Red Hen the recursive repetition of the narrative provides an aesthetic counterpart to the story inside. But perhaps the most significant narrative is that of Where the Wild Things Are. It is not surprising that Maurice Sendak and his editors weighed the value of each word, finally deciding in collaboration, as Selma Lanes tells us, to remove the word 'quick' from the lines.

and tamed them [quick] with the magic trick
of staring into all their yellow eyes without
blinking once

WT p 19 (Lanes 1980).

The presence of this word would in no way alter the sequence of events that make up the story, but it would make a marked difference to the narration by introducing a jingle-like pattern disturbing the atmosphere of dream. Countless readers recognise the significance of

the subtle and aesthetically pleasing rhythms of Sendak's narration as they stay close to the words of the text, however inexperienced their child listeners.

5.1.3

Intertextuality

Kristeva's notion of intertextuality seems less applicable to these narratives than Todorov's ideas of genre and the duality of story and narrative. Although each of these narratives invokes the memory of others in the same genre, there are no clear citations and only one vague reference towards other texts, which appears in Where The Wild Things Are with the words

and he sailed off through night and day and
in and out of weeks and almost over a year
W T printed narrative pp 14-15

This can be read as an echo of Lear's line in The Owl and the Pussycat

They sailed away for a year and a day,

(Lear 1943 p 252)

Sendak has taken Lear's formulaic representation of the passage of time and transformed it to display the conceptual framework of a young child,

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5.1.4

Barthes' conception of narrative structure

At first sight Barthes' conception of kernels and satellites seems similarly unfruitful: none of the verbally narrated events could be removed without altering the story, therefore all must be kernels. But in the illustrations, even in the rather modest pictures that accompany the text of The Enormous Turnip and The Little Red Hen, there are exotic birds, puzzled goats, frogs jumping off lily pads and

moons that wax and wane with extraordinary speed. The cat in The Enormous Turnip eyes the mouse in a way that has little to do with heaving the turnip out of the ground. Thus many of the events in the pictures are satellites, although those in the written text are all kernels and there are no verbal counterparts to Mrs Liebig moving the daffodils.

As to Barthes' semic and hermeneutic codes, these also appear to operate through the pictures rather more than through the written text. The picture books show these most strongly. In Rosie's Walk the hermeneutic code runs through the sequence of pictures, constantly presenting Rosie with potential barriers that threaten her safe return. In Where the Wild Things Are the picture on the wall at the bottom of the stairs provides a semic hint about the fantastic origins of Max's wild things. In the last picture the way in which Max has thrown back the head of his wolf suit suggests he has sloughed off the role of monster himself.

It is hard to see the symbolic code operating to any degree in The Enormous Turnip or Rosie's Walk, but the little red hen is surely the personification of conscientious (and self-righteous) industriousness as she doggedly turns her grains of wheat into bread. And in Where the Wild Things Are the symbolic code traverses both text and pictures. Max wears a crown and brandishes a sceptre as he imperiously commands the wild things and cries "Be still!", the very words (in Miller's translation) of Balzac's queen-woman in Sarrasine that caused Barthes to observe that all domination begins by prohibiting language (Barthes 1974 p 68).

5.1.5

Genette's conception of narrative structure

In terms of time relations as articulated by Genette, these narratives are much less complex than most contemporary prose fiction for adults. Events are told in the order of their happening, which Genette observes is typical of folk narratives but not at all of the Western literary tradition, marked from its inception by a characteristic effect of anachrony. With the exception of the little red hen's trips to the field to watch the wheat growing, all these narratives maintain a one to one correspondence between the number of occurrences of the events represented and of their narration. There is more variety in the representation of duration, as although the catalogue of places passed in Rosie's Walk has an even steadiness matching the pace of the walk itself, in the other three narratives some parts of the story's time span are told at length, while others are rapidly disposed of in such brief sentences as

There was plenty of it left for dinner the
next day and the day after.

ET pp 50;51

Apart from such summarising there seems very little complexity about the time relations between these narratives and the stories they represent.

As to mood, while all are, in Genette's terms direct narratives, told through narration rather than through the words of the characters, there is some variation in their treatment of speech. Where the Wild Things Are and The Little Red Hen make use of direct speech, The Enormous Turnip includes indirect speech and Rosie's Walk includes no speech at all.

In none of these books is there an omniscient narrator: no-one

tells us the thoughts of the Wild Things, the feelings of the black cat or what is going on inside the fox's head. But in Where the Wild Things Are and The Little Red Hen there is a sharp internal focalisation: we see the events through the perspective of the central character as we are told of Max's feelings of loneliness and what the little red hen says to herself. In The Enormous Turnip and Rosie's Walk the focalisation is external: the reader is left to infer the thoughts and feelings of the central characters.

There is no variation between the four narratives in terms of voice. All are classical subsequent narrations, told by a narrator who is absent from the events of the story and in all the telling is at only one remove from the events. There is no embedded narrative.

5.1.6

Summary of features of narrative structure

Unsurprisingly this examination has revealed simple stories conveyed through relatively straightforward narratives. Apart from some slight awkwardness about Max's journey, Beaugrande and Colby's rules fit them neatly even if they do not provide a full explanation of their narrative structure. These narratives belong to rather unsophisticated genres. All are clearly products of our time and place, embodying twentieth century Western views of what is appropriate content for children's stories. There is only one instance of intertextuality; the verbal narration includes no satellite events and there are only the thinnest traces of Barthes' hermeneutic and semic codes, although the symbolic code is more in evidence. Their voice is consistently that of classical narration and although there is some variation between the four texts in terms of

time relations and mood, there is nothing to approach the complexity of a short story by Angus Wilson let alone a novel by John Fowles.

But these are books read to a three year old. What is significant is that unlike the 'reading books' examined in Chapter 5, these are indubitably narrative texts with clearly structured stories at their hearts. Rosie's Walk may lack the length and structural complexity of The French Lieutenant's Woman, but they are the same kind of enterprise. Both take events and characters from the flux of first and second-hand experience and relate them in a patterned sequence that creates order and a sense of completeness and aesthetic satisfaction in the reader or listener. The patterning of both is in the narration as well as in the narrated events, and the sense of aesthetic satisfaction that they bring derives largely from this.

Thus far this examination of the larger structures of these texts has been carried out from the point of view of the adult reader, willing to engage with the text and to bring to it experiences that reveal and colour these structures. But of course what matters in these story readings is not what these texts mean to an informed adult reader, but what they mean to Anna. To what extent is she learning to activate the potential structures of written texts and to infuse them with her own particular experience? To answer this question we need to examine her conversational exchanges with her mother. But first we need to explore the structure of their conversation per se and to see how this differs from that of the narrative.

5.2

The structure of the accompanying conversations

These four narratives all have very distinct boundaries marked by

the covers of the book, but the accompanying conversations have no such easily recognisable lines of demarcation. We do not have four neatly defined conversations but four sets of exchanges, interspersed between parts of the narrative. The openings and closings of these four sets are provided by the act of story reading or of settling Anna to sleep. Other talk precedes or follows each of these transcribed 'conversations' since in every case the story-reading is one of three or four on that occasion. And yet the announcement of the title at the beginning and the references to other books or bedtime at the end, function as frames that set ideational limits on the conversation. Within these limits the conversation is structured in a number of ways.

5.2.1

The semantic structure of the exchange and larger units

5.2.1.1

Complete and incomplete exchanges

Not all the exchanges have the neat completeness of Berry's model and very few the Initiation, Response and Feedback format identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (Berry 1981, Sinclair and Coulthard 1975). After the elimination of the three exchanges where indecipherability of component utterances makes identification impossible, 52 classifiable exchanges remain. As Table 9.24 shows, of these only 33 are full exchanges, consisting of at least an initiation and a response. The remaining 19 are one part 'exchanges', initiations lacking verbal responses.

Table 9.24

Distribution of verbally complete and verbally incomplete exchanges

Story	Total of categorisable exchanges	Including initiation and response	Initiations lacking verbal responses
RW	15	9	6
WT	9	8	1
ET	13	4	9
LRH	15	12	3
TOTALS	52	33	19

This pattern seems initially to indicate a marked lack of coherence. A telephone call taking this form would probably be experienced as less than satisfactory. But Anna and her mother are face to face and share the same physical context. Gestures and actions complete many of these verbally incomplete exchanges. Her mother needs no verbal response when she asks Anna to hurry up. Anna may point to show which book she wants read next and may happily accept a silent indication of where the little mouse is.

Only in one instance does a one part 'exchange' seem clearly incomplete in semantic terms. This is where Anna initiates a question with 'why?' for the third time in succession in LRH 35. Her mother fails to respond and returns instead to the narrative. In all the other 18 cases, verbal incompleteness is no clear indication of fragmented discourse.

5.2.1.2

Ideational patterns within and between exchanges

Within the thirty-three complete exchanges there is a marked ideational interdependence between moves. In 18 of the exchanges the second or third move is dependent on the first and often takes the minimal form of a 'yes', 'no' or 'um' response, clearly quite incomprehensible outside its verbal context.

This interdependence also operates between exchanges, although not to such a marked degree. We cannot know what Anna means when she says

Thought it wasn't

ET Exchange C

without an awareness of the preceding exchanges about the size of the turnip.

Over all the complete exchanges, the commodity remains constant. Where one participant asks for information, the other supplies it. But the commodity is not always as simple as this. An initiation that gives information may be prefaced by a request for attention.

Anna Look, look, the mouse isn't shook.

ET Exchange M

More frequently a request for confirmation is added to the supply of information.

Mother Yours has got a different sort of nose,
hasn't it?

Anna Um.

WT Exchange H

Sometimes the commodity is not so much mixed as multivalent. At the beginning of the reading of Where the Wild Things Are, Anna supplies the information that she has to take something off. Her mother

responds with what appears to be a request for confirmation of a slightly different proposition, namely that she should take the thing off after the story. This is, of course a request for action (or rather temporary inaction) as well as a request for the confirmation of a proposition.

Thus while these exchanges all display a constancy of commodity between one move and the next, within each move there is scope for extending the original commodity.

There is also continuity of commodity between many of the exchanges. As Table 9.25 shows, the majority of the exchanges fall into groups or sequences of two, three or four, linked to each other by a clear continuation of commodity. In these sequences, each exchange after the first develops out of the one preceding it in a linear, progressive way. Although each exchange might be ideationally independent in that each could be comprehended in isolation, yet the initiation of each exchange following the first, is contingent on a proposition constructed in the preceding exchange. Thus in the reading of The Little Red Hen Anna initiates Exchange D with the question 'Why's money?', which is contingent on her mother's response in Exchange C 'No, it's not chocolate money, that's alright.'. It should also be emphasised that of the 23 apparently isolated exchanges, 14 are contingent on the spoken or pictorial narrative. They do not emerge from nowhere, but originate from the narrative, the object of mutual attention.

Table 9.25

Grouping of exchanges by constancy of commodity

Story	Total of categorisable exchanges	Isolated Exchanges	Exchanges grouped in twos	Exchanges grouped in threes	Exchanges grouped in fours
RW	15	6	6	3	4
WT	9	3	2		
ET	13	6	4	3	
LRH	15	8	4	3	
Totals	52	23	16	9	4

The commodity being exchanged is nearly always information, and indeed most of that information is story-related. Except for Anna's concern to take something off at the start of the reading of Where the Wild Things Are and her puzzlement about the coins in her lap that persistently intrudes in The Little Red Hen, the exchanges which do not deal in story-related information are confined to the beginning and the end of the story readings. With these exceptions, all the conversational interaction that takes place between these limits is related to the story, providing the conversation with a kind of thematic consistency that seems rare in conversations with young children.

Table 9.26

Nature of commodity being exchanged

Story	Total of categorisable exchanges	Action or Attention	Story- related informa- tion	Other informa- tion	Unclear
RW	15	1	13	1	
WT	9	2	5	2	
ET	13	1	10		2
LRH	15	1	7	6	1
Totals	52	5	35	9	3

When information is the commodity and the exchange is verbally complete, propositions are certainly spread across the exchange in all four ways that Berry itemises. Thus sometimes the first speaker provides a complete proposition which the second speaker may support or leave unsupported; and sometimes the first speaker provides only a basis for a proposition which the second speaker then completes, after which the first speaker may provide support for the proposition (producing an IRF structure) or may leave unsupported. However in completing or supporting a proposition, the second speaker may introduce one or more additional propositions in justification or explanation.

Anna Uh, this doesn't come off!

Mother No, it's not chocolate money,
that's alright.

LRH Exchange C

Here her mother has responded not only to Anna's proposition 'It doesn't come off!' but also in the same breath to what she infers to be the cause of Anna's puzzlement and to the puzzlement itself. Thus the ideational structure of these informational exchanges is complex in ways unrecognised in Berry's model.

5.2.1.3

Interpersonal patterns within exchanges

The most striking feature of the interpersonal patterning of these exchanges is that it reveals Anna taking the leading role. As Table 9.27 shows, in every story reading Anna initiates at least two thirds of the conversational exchanges. Anna may be the novice, but as she finds her way round these new forms and new meanings she is deciding for herself what she wants to talk about. This is a striking repetition of the interactive patterning found by Trevarthen to typify pre-speech communication between babies and adult caretakers and by Wells to be characteristic of conversational interaction between children and their parents (Trevarthen 1979, Wells 1981c).

Table 9.27

Inter-personal patterning of exchanges

Initiator	Story	Total of categorisable exchanges	Complete exchanges following rules of reciprocity	'Give' unacknow- ledged verbally	'Request' unrespon- ded to verbally	'Request' turned back on initiator
Either	RW	15	8	5	1	1
	WT	9	7	0	1	1
	ET	13	4	5	4	0
	LRH	15	12	1	2	0
	Totals	52	31	11	8	2
Anna	RW	10	7	2	0	1
	WT	6	6		0	0
	ET	11	4	4	3	
	LRH	13	11	1	1	
	Totals	40	28	7	4	1
Mother	RW	5	1	3	1	0
	WT	3	1		1	1
	ET	2	0	1	1	
	LRH	2	1	0	1	
	Totals	12	3	4	4	1

To Anna's initiatives her mother plays a supporting rather than a bystanding role. As Table 9.27 shows, 70% of Anna's initiations are extended by her mother into verbally complete exchanges following the rules of reciprocity. Anna is less generous: only 25% of the

exchanges that her mother initiates are similarly completed. Embedded as these exchanges are in a shared physical context, as I have noted their absence of verbal completeness does not indicate a failure to communicate. On the other hand a high proportion of verbal completion surely indicates a shift towards verbal self-sufficiency and independence from physical context. Anna's mother treats Anna's initiatives in a way that shifts the discourse towards the explicitness and formal completeness of written language.

The interactive patterning between adult and child is markedly different from that of the junior school classroom observed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). Instead of the adult being the leader both as initiator and arbiter of acceptability of response, it is the child who takes the leading role. As Trevarthen observes of infants engaging in their first inter-personal communications, here the child is the virtuoso while the parent is the supportive but self-effacing accompanist (Trevarthen 1979).

5.3

The function of the conversational utterances in the actualization of the narrative structures

At this point we must turn to examine the conversation in terms of its relation to the narrative. The utterance by utterance examination in Section has 3 indicated that mother and child are concerned partly to establish connections between the narrated events and Anna's own first-hand experience and partly to construe the pictures. But these semantic acts have a context. In each story-reading Anna and her mother have an over-riding concern to realize the narrative, to actualize the potential narrative structures and to build a complex,

textured and coherent whole.

It is in terms of the story that the life to text connections are made and the pictures interpreted. This is particularly evident in Rosie's Walk where the printed text provides an uneventful narrative, but the richer story, sharp with the constant threat to the innocuous hen of being pounced on and eaten by the unmentioned fox, is to be found in the pictures alone. The comments of both mother and child focus on the kernel events of the fox following Rosie and his desire to eat her. They ignore the satellite events of the frog on the lily pad and the goat by the hay. Outside the story context these pictures could be read in many other ways, but mother and child are reading them for a complex purpose - to establish the story and to actualize the hermeneutic code of this verbal and visual narrative.

In doing so they are not using the stance of the narrative text. The sure voice of Genette's classical subsequent narration has been replaced by the tentative voice of the spectator who feels an excited uncertainty about the outcome of the events she is witnessing. Their comments represent the actions and characters as operating in the present not the past: what is in the picture is happening now, whereas what is in the verbal narrative has already happened. The ever present sense of uncertainty about what might happen next is in marked contrast of the immutable certainty of the narrative. Mother and child seem to be concerned not simply to establish an invariant story, but also to construct a fictive world containing possibilities that extend beyond the invariant story of the spoken narrative. As they look at the pictures their intention seems to be to construe them not simply in order to identify elements in the story, nor just to supply elements missing from the verbal narrative. They seem instead to

construe them in order to articulate a world where many things might happen. Anna's mother says with apparent conviction:

I think he's going to get her this time

Mother RW35

despite the fact that she has read the story to Anna many times before and both know that the fox will be perpetually frustrated in his attempts to catch Rosie. In the same story reading Anna reveals a similar concern with the possible story future rather than the certain story past when she asks whether the fox is able to get out of the hay. At the end she announces firmly that the fox can't get Rosie in her cage.

They also talk about the motivational principles that govern both the range of possibilities and the choice between them. Anna is curious about the motives that shape the characters' actions, about why the fox will climb out of the hay in Rosie's Walk and why the other animals won't help in The Little Red Hen.

Their feelings and judgements about the characters and their actions are further topics of conversation. Anna expresses strong disapproval of the laziness of the other farmyard animals in The Little Red Hen. As they look at the wordless pages in Where the Wild Things Are her mother initiates a string of comments on their favourite monsters. Mother and child, through their conversational talk, are creating a story world and moving about inside that world, making judgements on its elements and exploring its possibilities and laws. Within this world there are many things to talk about and, as other readings of these stories indicate, the topics chosen vary from one reading to the next. At each reading they construct a different 'reading'.

Yet where they talk of what might happen, their speculations are rooted in the logic of the story. There is no suggestion that the fox might get bored in Rosie's Walk, that a blight might destroy the young wheat in The Little Red Hen, or that Max might get picked up by a cruise liner in Where the Wild Things Are. For the logic of each story is that the characters behave autonomously and consistently, the significant events that take place are the outcome of this behaviour, and the social and mechanical complexities of the modern world are, by and large, kept at bay.

Anna and her mother do not question the deviations of this story logic from the logic of literal everyday reality. They do not comment on the elastic time in Where the Wild Things Are nor on the oddity of a hen taking corn to be ground by a human miller in The Little Red Hen. Instead they accept the genres and move around in the worlds where these things happen, through utterances that seem in part to be concerned to explore and enjoy the logic binding the story together.

On occasion her mother would seem to prefer Anna to accept rather than explore this logic, as in the series of questions and answers in utterances 29 to 33 in The Little Red Hen. The answers her mother gives, the reasons she provides, only prompt Anna to question further until at Anna's third question her mother decides to abandon her attempt to explain the logic and instead turn back to the business of narrating the story as if some aspects of this logic cannot be readily explained but must simply be taken as given.

We cannot know in detail the extent to which the potential structures of the narrative are actualized for Anna. But an examination of the conversational utterances has shown us her concern to articulate each set of kernel events and make each story a coherent

whole, bound by the logic of its particular genre. Anna's narrative contributions provide some further clues. When she says

"I will" said the fox

Anna LRH 53

she introduces a character appropriate to the genre, but quite alien to the particular story which she has heard several times before. However later in the same reading with the words

"No no no no you will not"

Anna LRH 76

she produces an utterance which deviates from the printed text only in its repetition of the word 'no'. This repetition is quite appropriate to the self-righteousness of the central character and her tone of triumph suggests that Anna has grasped the significance of this event as the turning point of the story.

The many utterances spoken in unison with her mother in the reading of The Enormous Turnip show her delight in the patterned text and her mastery of its form. And in all her narrative utterances she preserves the mood and voice of the narrator, thus making them readily distinguishable from her conversational utterances. But whether the semic hints and symbolic statements in Where the Wild Things Are exist for her is rather more doubtful. Certainly she gives no overt indication of this.

And of course this examination has only scratched the surface of the structures and meanings of these story readings and of the stories that lie at their heart. Narratives such as these have been and will continue to be the object of extensive interpretive investigation. There is no doubt that their meanings are potent and that within the structures of the narrative and beneath the explicitness of the

narrative utterances, lie implicit themes of challenge and achievement, danger and the return to safety, exclusion and re-acceptance into the family, justice and morality. What is clear from these transcripts is that Anna and her mother enjoy exploring these themes together in stories whose very removal from literal reality - to worlds where hens harvest corn, mice help cats, small boys venture out across oceans on their own - provides a third area in which parent and child can explore important concerns in safety, where they can set aside the inevitable conflicts of the day and can share a mental world without either intruding on the other's privacy. It is hardly surprising that so many parents and children feel such a potent pleasure in the experience.

6

Discussion and conclusions

6.1

Rules underlying these story readings

We cannot tell exactly what Anna makes of these narratives, but underneath these story readings there appear to be a number of tacit agreements between mother and child determining the semantic features of individual utterances noted in Section 3 (and consequently the formal features noted in Section 4) as well as the features of discourse structure noted in the last section.

1. A narration is predominantly a verbal construct rather than a kind of verbal communication, therefore it does not vary substantially in form or content from one telling to another nor is its extreme explicitness unnecessary or intrusive.

2. The experiential content of stories is different from that of everyday life but within each story it is consistent and should be respected.
 3. Each story contains within it the seeds of possible alternative stories. It is a legitimate activity to explore how these seeds might develop.
 4. It is also legitimate to explore observations, feelings and attitudes towards events and characters in the story.
 5. It is legitimate for thoughts about the story to be imbued with feelings and for feelings to be intermingled with thoughts.
 6. In explorations of both types through story related talk, each partner is expected to know what the other is talking about, but not what she is likely to say about it.
 7. Conversation is a form of verbal communication supplemented and complemented by forms of non-verbal communication and by shared experience which render a high degree of explicitness unnecessary.
- These agreements can be seen as rules which explain much of the variation between the conversation and the narration in these story readings. At first sight it would appear that they are rules for pulling language in different directions: sometimes towards the extreme oral variety and the structures of conversation, and sometimes towards the extreme written variety and the structures of narrative fiction. But although these real differences exist and have been demonstrated, they do not necessarily imply conflict. There are two other rules underlying those stated.
8. Reading a story is a matter of creating a construct with invariable form but a significance that develops gradually through re-readings.

9. The conversation in which the narration is embedded is as important as narration itself in realizing the narrative.

Thus the words of the narration must remain virtually unchanged from one reading to the next whereas in the accompanying conversation mother and child are free to concern themselves with a range of activities devoted to developing the narrative's significance. This is predominantly a matter of establishing the coherence of the fictive world and setting up affective and empathetic links with the characters that inhabit it. The text to life and life to text moves seem subservient to this larger purpose.

Nice and safe now

Mother RW 50

says Anna's mother at the end of Rosie's Walk before she turns out Anna's light. There is more than aesthetic satisfaction here. She is surely stressing Rosie's safe return in order to leave Anna in a mood conducive to untroubled sleep. Anna and her mother are concerned to construct and enter the world of the story, to take on its laws and through this activity to structure and give coherence to their own less orderly experiences and emotions.

6.2

Taking on new forms and meanings

Paradoxically the loose and shifting structures of conversation permit mother and child to actualize the tighter and more complex structures of narrative. The discourse structures Anna is familiar with and in which she plays the leading role, serve to elaborate and articulate the less familiar structures of the narrative where her mother has control of the discourse. What is new is not merely

juxtaposed with what is familiar: it is through the familiar that the new is given its coherence and significance and enters Anna's possession.

Anna is being initiated into the process of reading as a process of active meaning construction in which the reader makes a personal sense of whole texts. Her mother makes no attempt to disentangle the various levels of linguistic and literary understanding of which such meaning making is composed. At one and the same time she is increasing Anna's familiarity with the peculiarities of the situation of story reading, enlarging her sense of the kinds of propositional meanings of which stories are composed, accustoming her to the narrow formality of the interpersonal meanings conveyed from writer to reader and extending her repertoire of the distinctive lexical and syntactic forms that realize these in narrative text. There is no pre-learning of the vocabulary, no preliminary session with post-modified noun phrases or passive non-finite clauses, nor any exclusive attention to the sequence of events per se.

Instead all this learning of new forms and meanings is organised and ordered by a central purpose which is to produce, celebrate and give personal meaning to a whole narrative that brings its own semantic reward. Anna's mother acts on the expectation that this activity will be enjoyable to Anna, and that a determination to savour each story will drive Anna to make sense of the new forms as she constructs the new meanings. Her mother does not see her job to be ensuring either that Anna has 'understood' each new word or structure, or that she can give a literally faithful account of the events of the story. Indeed there is an implicit assumption that to do any of these things would be to distract attention from the central activity.

The denotation (and connotation) of the lexis, the meaning relations realized in the syntax and the event structure of the story, matter only in terms of their contribution to the narrative Anna is constructing in her head. And there is no one correct internal narrative. What matters is that Anna should construct something pleasing to herself and that this pleasure should be shared between mother and child. That Anna sees a richer understanding as more rewarding is evidenced by the questions she asks. And the explanations that her mother provides are in response to such questions: they are not items on a didactic agenda whose completion will indicate a correct reading of the text.

Re-reading will deepen Anna's understanding of the narrative wholes and of their parts, of the functions and of their forms, and make each narrative more firmly her own. As she comes to know a number of texts very well indeed and to apprehend (albeit intuitively) the relationship between the forms and meanings of which they are composed, she will be able to make satisfying sense of more complex texts and demand fewer re-readings. But all this learning is likely to be characterised by simultaneous attention to a number of different linguistic and literary levels. Her mother's mediation through her use of intonation and her responses to Anna's queries, will assist Anna to conquer this new territory. As Anna's familiarity with new forms and new meanings develops, this mediation will become less necessary. It is likely that already Anna is using her familiarity with other stories to help her gloss new ones: familiar forms in new combinations help her construct new meanings, familiar meanings help her make sense of new forms. As she hears more stories she will have a richer stock to draw on and will be less in need of the mediation

provided by a known and trusted adult. And with each new narrative her sense of the whole will be developed more from internal dialogue than from external dialogue with an experienced reader. But in all the stages of her progress towards a richer experience of narrative, she will proceed along a broad front. She must, if the activity is to be intrinsically rewarding. For an adult to abstract one element from the narrative and 'teach' it to Anna would be to rob her of the pleasure of making the narrative her own. Although she is not reading independently, the process Anna is engaged in has the key features of Rumelhart's account of skilled adult reading: it is simultaneous, multi-level, interactive processing (Rumelhart 1976).

6.3

The relationship between teacher and learner

Anna's mother not only delivers to her the words of the narrative, she also prompts, supports and extends her enquiries. The conversation with her mother provides Anna with an external model for the internal conversation with the author that is necessary to any but the most superficial reading of a narrative text. Thus her mother helps Anna to do in partnership what she cannot yet do for herself. In her actions, she implicitly shares the view embodied in Vygotsky's much quoted observation.

What the child can do in co-operation today, he
can do alone tomorrow

(Vygotsky 1962 p.104)

Perhaps Anna might have achieved an internal conversation on her own. Perhaps interaction with a skilled reader is not the only route to interactive reading. But it certainly appears to be an effective route for Anna, enabling her to actualize the potential structures

in ways that draw on her own particular knowledge and experience.

6.4

The potential relevance of this experience to learning to read in school

The timing of this entry into interactive reading is significant. Before she is asked to set about the business of matching printed to spoken words, Anna is being helped by her mother to engage in the very complex business of constructing her own reading of a narrative text. Thus her initiation into reading is through a supported engagement with the text. This activity is at a simpler level, but not at all dissimilar from a 'literate' adult's reading of a novel such as The French Lieutenant's Woman (Fowles 1969). Her mother's actions imply that activity of this sort is not only an important end result of learning to read, but also, paradoxically, its central precondition. In her view a child must begin with the enjoyable business of making sense of narratives in picture books, before tackling the conventions that relate the print on the page to the spoken word.

However Anna's future teachers may hold rather different ideas about learning to read and may seek to reduce the complex process of making sense of a text to a set of decontextualised skills and sub-skills. Certainly Anna has yet to learn the phoneme-grapheme relationships of our orthographic system. When the matching of printed to spoken word is brought to the fore, Anna may be presented with texts as unsatisfactory as some of those examined in Chapter 5. She may be expected to begin her school initiation into reading by recognising words out of context, to proceed by reading the text with word for word accuracy and in both operations to respond obediently to

instruction rather than to take the initiative for herself. Her teacher is likely to see her own role not as supporting Anna's independent endeavour, but as providing her with generalised instructions on 'word attack' skills, reminding her of such instructions, and correcting her errors. She is likely to expect Anna, by application of such instructions, to take on all the work of word identification herself, from her first 'reading book' onward, and to answer rather than ask questions. Anna will thus be unable to make full use of her familiarity with the forms of written language and her considerable experience of making sense of written narrative.

And yet, as we have seen in Chapter 2, Wells' evidence shows that even in the face of discontinuity of this sort, children such as Anna, with extensive experience of stories, have an advantage over their less 'literate' classmates (Wells 1982a). Anna has a strong sense of the rich semantic rewards that printed narrative can yield. If she is helped to perceive the school ritual of learning to read as a means to gaining such rewards by herself, then she might be more tolerant than others of the thin little texts she is likely to be given, of the bizarre games she is expected to play and of the submissive role she is allotted.

But to say this is to do little more than repeat the old argument that the experience of hearing stories read aloud enhances the motivation for learning to read. The analysis in this chapter shows some rather different reasons why such an experience might assist Anna in learning to decode printed text for herself, even in a situation where the texts and the learning processes as presented by the teacher seem to differ significantly from those Anna has experienced so enjoyably with her mother. What follows is an exploration of how

Anna's pre-school literary experience might assist her even if she encounters a teacher whose actions are largely guided by a behaviourist view of the process of learning to read, and who dispenses texts of the type examined in Chapter 5.

Such texts, while lacking in many instances the coherence and significance of narrative texts written for the reader's pleasure, nonetheless as Chapter 5 has shown, differ markedly from conversation and possess many features of written language. They are explicit and self-contained. With a 'reading book' in her hands, Anna will know that what meaning can be made of it must come from her interaction with the text, not from the teacher's personal history or the expression on her face. She will know that the words of the text will remain unaltered from one reading to the next, whatever has happened in her life between. These unchanging words are those of an absent participant who has no knowledge of Anna or her history, and who communicates in monologue. Anna is, at least implicitly, familiar with this situation and undisturbed by it.

In many of the texts she will find a narrative continuity, a sequential set of events concerning the same characters and extending over as many as 60 sentences. What meaning can be constructed from such narratives is to be developed out of considering them as wholes and this again will be a familiar matter to Anna.

The sentences of these reading texts will also be familiar in their stress on ideational rather than inter-personal content. The ideational meaning may be markedly poorer than that of the texts she is used to, but it will be there, and important in its own right, not as a token for inter-personal meanings.

The form of these sentences will also be familiar: the vast

majority will be declarative in mood, every one will be composed of at least one finite clause containing a finite verb, and in the case of declarative and interrogative clauses, nouns or pronouns in the subject slot. The virtual absence of contracted forms and the preposing of adverbial groups will not be new to Anna either.

In all these respects Anna will find continuity between what she has learnt of the language of books at home and what she finds in her reading book at school. She has also learnt to talk about language. The metaphor contained in the words

Where are we now?

Anna LRH 56

will enable her to objectify the process of reading and to learn (if she has not already) the uses of such invaluable terms as 'letter', 'word' and 'sentence'. Such remarks also indicate that she is developing mastery of many of the conventions of print that Clay shows to be so crucial to learning to read, such as page order, line directionality and order, and the correspondence of such spatial order with the temporal order of the spoken word.

There is a further significant point. Anna has, at less than four years, developed a confident familiarity with two distinct varieties of English - the informal spoken language of her home and the more formal written language of her books. She is aware that situations that differ with respect to the central presence of the printed text, demand different kinds of language. This awareness could make it markedly easier for her to learn a third variety, the language of the reading book, just as bilinguals appear to find it easier than monolinguals to learn a new language (Pickett 1978, Stenn 1973).

Thus in a number of significant ways Anna's experience of the

language of books could contribute to her success in learning to read, even in the bizarre and artificial context of what seems to constitute the teaching of reading in many reception classrooms. What is likely to be missing is a sense of shared endeavour and enjoyment, active participation in bringing together new forms and new meanings and a complex central purpose - the construction of the coherence, significance and patterned realization of narrative, all of which Anna has experienced at home. In such a situation Anna will be like a learner driver who, after a number of enjoyable outings in a dual control car, changes to a driving school where she is expected not to go out on the road but to sit behind the wheel in a specially constructed car with no engine, and to operate not in response to the conditions on the road, but to directions given by her instructor. She will be familiar with many of the operations, and probably able to perform a number of them on her own, but perhaps not in a way that finds favour with her instructor.

It is also worth considering that Anna may learn to read in spite of, rather than because of, school instruction. It is highly unlikely that her home encounters with books will cease when she enters school. She may make her way through the school reading scheme following her own, rather than her teacher's instructions. She may, alternatively, learn to identify the printed words in familiar books at home, implicitly establishing the rule systems of English orthography through matching the spoken and printed words of familiar texts.

But it remains that Anna's interests will probably be far better served by the unlikely eventuality of continuity between her experience of reading with her mother and what she encounters under the heading of reading in school. Anna still has to learn the complex

phoneme-grapheme relationships that are embodied in our alphabetic spelling system. The transcripts of these story readings give little indication that she has any awareness of these. Such learning is essential if she is to become an independent reader. But if her teacher encourages her to make use of her already extensive knowledge of the forms and meanings of printed texts, learning these relationships will be a less arduous and stressful process than it would be if this earlier learning were declared inadmissible.

All the linguistic activity identified in Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this chapter is not merely relevant to reading. It is the major part of what reading is about. As I have shown in Chapter One, the matching of sound to symbols is only a small part of the process of reading. Anna will go to school having constructed the submerged nine tenths of the reading iceberg, the bulb and root system of the reading daffodil, or perhaps the reading butterfly that lies inside the shell of the alphabetic code. It is surely only when reading is narrowly conceived as nothing more than the matching of sound to printed symbol that the relevance of an experience of hearing stories read in the manner that Anna's mother reads to her, can be seen as a case that needs to be argued. And even if learning to read is thus narrowly defined, any recognition of the part played by syntactic or semantic cues in word identification in the early stages of learning to read must be associated with a recognition that experience of books of the kind that Anna has enjoyed will provide the child with supporting strategies of word identification that will remove the pressure from processing the graphic information and thus enable her to carry out this activity in a more controlled and confident manner.

I am not arguing that Anna, or any child with a similar pre-school

experience will encounter no problems in learning to read in school. It may be that the home and school views of reading will be so distinct that the child becomes paralysed by an inability to reconcile them. It may be that the essential matter of identifying the sequences of phonemes of spoken words and matching these to the graphemes of the printed text will pose serious difficulties. What I am arguing is that in many respects Anna has already learnt to read at home and thus it is small wonder that children with an experience similar to hers find it relatively easy to learn the additional reading lessons of the infant classroom and to progress rapidly towards the status of independent reader.

CHAPTER TEN

The Findings of the School Study

1

Introduction

In the last chapter I examined four story readings at home and showed mother and child to be moving between very different kinds of language. In the mutually satisfying event of the bed-time story, the mother enables the child to extend her linguistic repertoire to include forms and meanings of the language of narrative fiction. Although it cannot be considered a sufficient condition, nor even a necessary condition, as I have argued in Chapters 1, 2, 5 and 6, the possession of such language has clear relevance to the process of learning to read. In my analysis of these story readings I suggest it is through the discourse structure of the conversation in which the narrative is embedded that Anna is enabled to make these new meanings and forms her own.

Since there is little doubt that children from such bookish 'Maintown' homes tend to come to school well versed in the language of fictional narrative, my analysis of the home data is concerned to document in a synchronic way what growing mastery of these forms and meanings looks like, and the nature of the interactions through which it is achieved. My exclusive focus on the mother's story readings is also influenced by the consideration that to attempt to elicit retellings from the child would be to trespass on the intimacy of these story sessions.

However, the context of the nursery study is different. As I have shown in Chapter 6 it is not generally agreed that children lacking

such book sharing experience at home can be successfully initiated into the language of books in the more public and formalised setting of a school classroom where, for those with little experience of it at home, written narrative fiction may represent an alien culture and indeed is likely to be presented in a strange dialect, so the challenge is firstly to note whether any significant progress in the mastery of the language of written narrative, can be made by children coming from non-bookish homes. If such progress can be detected, there is a *prima facie* case for regarding the teacher's classroom strategies and tactics as productive.

Of course, as I discussed in Chapters 7 and 8, the classroom context poses its own peculiar problems. Whereas Anna's possession of the language of books can be readily observed in her contributions to both the narrative proper and the conversation in which it is embedded, the presence of some twenty children at full class story readings limits the participation of even the most voluble. Furthermore in this particular classroom these story readings are dominated in the early months of the school year under study by Andrew, the son of one of Mrs G's colleagues, an extremely vocal child, who entered the nursery class with an informed love of folk tales and picture books, and in the early months overawed and overshadowed his classmates in activities connected with books. He left the school in February.

For these reasons the transcriptions of these story readings give at best only fragmentary glimpses of what any individual makes of them, particularly in the early Andrew-dominated months. In the more open and public context of the nursery classroom it seemed not unduly intrusive to invite children to retell stories they had heard. The

data thus obtained gives a fuller indication of the nature and extent of the children's possession of story language. I therefore devote the first part of this chapter to an account of the story tellings of five children, as they talk their way through books with two puppets, myself and a tape recorder in attendance, in a quiet room at some distance from the classroom. After the nature and extent of their progress in the mastery of story language has been established, I examine the various book-related activities in and outside the classroom which have appeared to contribute to this, concluding my examination with a close analysis of four of Mrs G's class story readings.

2

A diachronic examination of the children's story tellings involving the puppets

The five children have been chosen to represent both girls and boys, both those comparatively talkative during Mrs G's class storytelling sessions and those comparatively silent, both those who frequently volunteered to help the cat puppet Charlie tell a story to the elephant puppet Bill and those who did so seldom, and both those often observed talking their way through books during free choice activities in the classroom and those seen to do this infrequently. These features are summarised in Table 10.1 below.

Table 10.1

Gender of selected children together with incidence of book related behaviour

	Sonia(B)*	Holly(E)*	Simon(H)*	Richard(K)*	Lee(O)*
gender	F	F	M	M	M
A	14	12	26	2	17
B	11	9	5	6	5
C	4	7	2	4	1

*code letter in transcripts

A number of attributed contributions to selected class story readings

B number of recorded story tellings with puppets

C number of observed book 'readings' in class

At the beginning of the school year my attempts to gauge what sense the children had made of the stories read by Mrs G to a largely puzzled and distractible audience, met with little success. If listening to stories was for most of them an unfamiliar activity in which they wriggled as participants in an alien ritual, telling stories themselves seemed even more alien. My first naive suggestions that someone might want to tell me the story of The Three Billy Goats Gruff were greeted invariably with a politely embarrassed silence. This response suggested to me that they might have reasoned that I had heard Mrs G tell the story and furthermore I was an adult not a child, so why should I ask a child to tell me a story normally told by an adult to a child? Reasoning that a readily perceptible social need to tell me a story could not easily be constructed and that the children all seemed well used to playing with dolls and to ascribing feelings

and intentions to them, I quickly introduced the two puppets, Charlie the cat and Bill the elephant. In the hands of a volunteer, Charlie would listen to Mrs G's words while Bill had a snooze. Later Bill would wake up eager to hear the story from Charlie. This fiction was readily accepted by all the children. In these circumstances all of them held 'reading' a story to be a valid activity.

In analysing the mass of data thus collected I aimed to select three tellings from each chosen child - one from the autumn months, one from the winter months (or spring where this was not possible) and the last from the summer months. As there is no recording of Lee before January, this produces 14 stories for analysis, all of which have previously been read to the children. The linguistic features I choose to examine are those that appear from the home reading to differentiate sharply between the language of informal conversation with young children, and the language of books written for young children. In order of examination these are features that realize explicitness and inexplicitness, verbal elaboration, sentence structure and discourse structure. For the first four features I examine in detail the first ten utterances of each 'story telling' excluding such utterances as "Mmm", "yeah" and "Ah" and also utterances consisting solely of narrated speech.

2.1

Explicitness

All five children make marked movements from inexplicitness to explicitness over the course of the year. This growth can be traced in part by their use of referential items, including both pronouns and the determiner 'the'. In October Sonia talks of 'they' and 'she' and

'the man', 'the toys', 'the shop', 'the stuff' and 'that shop' with no verbal antecedent. Clearly these items are being used deictically rather than cohesively. She also uses the substitutive verb 'do' and the substitutive noun 'stuff', again without verbal antecedent. This inexplicitness is further compounded by the omission of the subject in six of her ten utterances. These features combine to create an inexplicitness very like that of the conversational utterances between Anna and her mother in the home story readings, particularly those that concern the wordless pictures in Where the Wild Things Are. It is as if Sonia assumes that Bill the elephant and I know what she is talking about, so there is no social need for her to articulate the subject.

And the three other children recorded in October show similar inexplicitness at this time. Simon makes deictic use of 'there' once, 'this' twice and 'that' seven times in his first ten utterances and gives no verbal antecedent to his use of 'he' or 'it'. His use of 'the' in the phrase 'the door' is not so clearly deictic: it could be said to be dependent on the listener's inference that houses have doors, but he has not explicitly referred to any house. He also shows a predicative tendency similar to Sonia's, omitting the subject in three of his utterances. Richard utters the book's full title and then embeds a fragment of this in his otherwise totally deictic utterances, in which he uses 'that' 16 times. Holly's utterances show a similar dependence on the pictorial context in her use of 'the', 'his' and 'that'. Interestingly when she talks of her cat at home, where we evidently don't share a context, she articulates the subject and uses an appropriately indefinite determiner.

In December Holly is still making extensive use of exophoric

reference, giving no antecedent to 'he', 'it', or 'you' and using 'that' and 'there' indexically. However one of these uses, and her only omission of the subject, both occur in her metalinguistic comment "Can't read that bit". Furthermore her tenth utterance (omitting 'Mmm') is the highly explicit "One day morning there was, there was some trees all over the place." This seems a marked move towards the explicitness of the language of books.

Similar moves can be observed in the utterances of the children recorded in January. Simon gives no antecedent to 'he' or 'it' nor any clear referent for his two uses of 'that' or three uses of 'them'. But again his tenth utterance shows something of a shift towards explicitness although less dramatic than Holly's: "And all, and all the water in it, in the tap, eh?" None of these utterances lacks a subject. Sonia makes a more marked move towards explicitness. Although her two uses of 'the' are deictic, her January utterances all contain subjects and her deictic uses of 'that' and 'there' are confined to her meta-interpretational utterances "I know what that is. Down there.", uttered in a different tone of voice from the rest. Interestingly, in his first recorded story telling, after a deictic 'that' Lee produces an explicit referent to his 'he' although many of his utterances are fragmentary, they are not of the predicative type typical of the other children's October stories. Richard's March recording is markedly more explicit than his almost totally deictic October version of Do You Want to be My Friend. Like the other children he now uses lexical rather than substitutive verbs, but also referential items, in his case 'they' and 'he', without any explicit antecedent. He makes three uses of 'the', mentioning 'the fox', 'the field' and 'the woodman' without having introduced these earlier and

in circumstances where their existence cannot be readily inferred. In all of these features his story telling seems similar in its degree of explicitness to those of the other four children in the winter months.

But by the summer months the picture has changed for all the children. Because of his road accident at half term, there are no recordings for Simon after May. The first ten lines of his May recording do indeed include a number of indexical uses of 'they' and 'the', omit the subject in two cases and omit any attribution of speech. But they also include the very explicit utterance "All the ladybirds in the night going to s, are going to go home." This explicitness seems more typical of the rest of this storytelling which includes stretches such as

A big whale! And he had big teeth. And a big mouth.
Cor! It was going to eat somebody. It was darking and
darking. He went indoors because he was so sad.
And he didn't have any friends.

Simon 'puppet reading' 12-5-81,98-105

Sonia's June recording of Naughty Kevin (Hall 1977) is entirely explicit except for one deictic use of 'that'. Lee's June recording of Peter and the Wolf (Hunia 1978) is similarly fully explicit except for one unwarranted use of the determiner 'the' in front of the otherwise unintroduced 'grandfather'. In her July recording of the same story, Holly, like Simon, omits to attribute the direct speech and makes three unwarranted uses of 'the', but includes an appropriate use of 'a' in "A cat comes there and gets the bird and eats it". In his July recording of Goldilocks and the Three Bears Richard, however, is quite scrupulous about his use of referents and 'the', giving a cataphoric gloss by explicitly introducing the Three Bears and Goldilocks after he has introduced the referential forms. Indeed the only inexplicitness in his first ten utterances, is caused by failure

to complete the utterance or to name the perhaps unfamiliar 'porage'. Like the other children he has moved a long way from relying on the pictures to gloss his words. His utterances stand independent of what is depicted in front of both of us and the puppets. These figures are summarised in table 10.2 below, but since they do not distinguish between story telling utterances and others, they do not fully reflect the move to explicitness in story telling.

Table 10.2

Incidence of features realizing inexplicitness

Feature	Season	Sonia	Holly	Simon	Richard	Lee
A	autumn	3	2	12	16	
	winter/spring	3	3	8	3	2
	summer	1	0	3	0	0
B	autumn	3	2	0	0	
	winter/spring	2	0	1	3	0
	summer	0	2	2	0	1
C	autumn	6	0	3	0	
	winter/spring	0	1	0	0	0
	summer	0	0	2	0	0

- A referential item with no verbal antecedent
 B determiner 'the' with no verbal gloss
 C omitted subject

Verbal elaboration

If exophoric reference and the omission of the subject are indicators of inexplicitness, adverbials and lexically modified noun phrases are markers of verbal elaboration. In this respect also the five children appear to make a shift towards the language of books between the earlier and later recordings. There is scarcely any use of either feature in October. Sonia uses three adverbials but these all follow the verb form 'going' and simply indicate destination, a necessary completion rather than a verbal elaboration. She makes no use of lexically modified noun phrases, nor, if we discount the compound noun 'stomach ache', does any of the other three children recorded in October. Holly is the only one of these three to use an adverbial, when she tells me 'I got a cat at home'. Even this slight adverbial plays no part in her story telling.

In December Holly's noun phrases still stand without verbal elaboration, but she is beginning to make some use of adverbials, with such phrases as "out of front room" which have something more than the obligatory directional gloss of Sonia's in October. The two adverbials in her ninth utterance "One day morning there was, there was some trees all over the place" give it a marked if embryonic literary quality. There is little evidence of any such quality in the three January recordings. Lee talks of a 'long crocodile and a snake who goes 'down along' but Sonia produces only unmodified noun phrases. Both she and Simon produce some adverbials, but most of these are like Sonia's in October, providing necessary directional gloss to a verb of movement. Simon does however, produce two modified noun phrases, one a rather confused addition "all the cup a teapot in the tea" and one

the more comprehensible "all the water in it, in it, in the tap". Richard's March recording shows no noun phrase modification, but he does use three adverbials, although two of these again follow the verb 'go'.

But by the summer months the picture is rather different. Although in May Simon's noun phrases in his telling of Do You Want to be my Friend are unmodified, he uses three elaborating adverbials "in the night", "on the ladybird" and "in the water". Richard's July recording of Golidlocks includes four adverbials, but apart from "in a house" these are obligatory directional glosses. However in specifying whose chair he is talking about he produces two lexically modified noun phrases. In her June telling of Naughty Kevin Sonia uses the post-modified phrase "Kevin the Kitten" but this has been a ritualised part of her telling of these stories since January. More significantly she uses four adverbials, only one of which is an obligatory directional gloss. The other three are elaborative, giving locational information in two instances and, most unusually, indicating purpose in the third. Two of Holly's adverbials in her July telling of Peter and the Wolf seem clear elaborations: the utterances could stand without "to his, her legs" or the second use of "in the gate", but are more particular for their inclusion. She also uses the genitive form to specify "Peter's Grandad". Lee's June telling of the same story provides the richest use of these features. Some of his adverbials are obligatory directional glosses, but three, like "into the garden" "back" and "very quickly" are elaborative. However it is his noun phrases that give the sense of particularity. He specifies "a baby duck" and "a mummy duck" but more strikingly "a duck under water" and "a fish deep under water", clearly echoing the

phrases of the printed original.

These figures are summarised in table 10.3 below.

Table 10.3

Incidence of features of verbal elaboration

Feature	Season	Sonia	Holly	Simon	Richard	Lee
A	autumn	0	1	0	0	
	winter/spring	0	3	0	1	1
	summer	3	2	3	1	3
B	autumn	0	0	0	0	
	winter/spring	0	0	2	0	1
	summer	1	1	0	2	4

A elaborative adverbials

B lexically modified noun phrases

2.3

Sentence structure

The movement from inexplicitness to the beginnings of elaboration is realized not only in the composition of noun phrases and the incidence of adverbials, but also in the sentence structure. From autumn to summer all the children except Simon make a marked movement towards sentences of the SPCA type. In the autumn all produce fragmentary utterances such as "Buying Soup", "horse" and "got sugar in there", many of which are labels. By the summer, apart from the announcement of the title, there are no such labels, although a few

utterances such as Simon's "Get the, the friends are" appear, from intonational clues, to be incomplete. All the apparently complete utterances contain a subject and a predicator, a striking change from the situation in October.

This movement away from the more fragmented utterances typical of conversation to the formal completeness more associated with written text, is accompanied by an increase in complexity of sentence structure. Whereas in the autumn Holly, through embedded speech containing an embedded thought, produces the only utterance with more than one clause, by the Summer each child produces at least one complex sentence in the ten utterances under examination, usually through the embedding of direct speech or co-ordination of finite clauses. Holly uses this device, together with ellipsis of the subject to elegantly economical effect "A cat comes there and gets the bird and eats it." Like Richard, Lee, makes use of non-finite clauses, one as an adverbial and one as a noun clause in his summer story-telling. Remarkably he embeds a finite clause inside his adverbial clause, which results in the highly informative utterance "He went out into the garden to go where the wolf lives." None of the October recordings includes any comparable structure. The figures are presented in Tables 10.4 and 10.5 below

Table 10.4

Incidence of incomplete SPCA structures

Season	Sonia	Holly	Simon	Richard	Lee
autumn	7	3	3	2	
winter/spring	4	2	2	0	5
summer	0	1	4	0	0

Table 10.5

Incidence of clauses additional to main clauses (excluding tags)

Season	Sonia	Holly	Simon	Richard	Lee
autumn	0	2	0	0	
winter/spring	0	5	1	1	0
summer	1	3	1	3	3

2.4

Discourse structure

Every one of the five children under study shows marked development in terms of the discourse structure of their responses to the story telling situation. For most this means a shift from a conversational structure to a monologue with something of narrative form. I examine the progress of the five children in turn with

respect to this development, before considering some general issues.

Sonia, a quiet and rather reserved child, produces no more than two consecutive utterances in her October recording of The Little Old Man who Could not Read (Black 1968). This fact and a ratio of these child utterances to my adult utterances of 13:27, indicates something of her conversational conception of the situation. This conversation is, however, of an unusual type for a child of Sonia's age in that the commodity is constant and with few exceptions, Sonia takes the responding rather than the initiatory role. But by June the picture is rather different and even more marked than the monologue figure of 6 consecutive utterances and a child/adult ratio of 9:3 would indicate. After my very brief and inexplicit invitation, Sonia launches into a monologue which I interrupt to respond to a second child. What remains unaltered during this time is the constancy of commodity. From October to June, after she is invited to help Charlie tell the story to Bill, all Sonia's utterances concern what is depicted on the page in front of her: in October she is conversing about these pictures, not straying beyond them, but by June she is constructing a narrative. The book Sonia has chosen for this story telling is Naughty Kevin (Hall 1977), a meagre tale, whose story lacks both a turning point and a marked terminal state. Sonia has a distinct liking for this and other books in the series. She has caught the flatness of the narration, and the over-riding concern with order and cleanliness that is typical of this genre of pedestrian domestic routine. There are no satellites in the text, no network of codes, complex or otherwise. The time relations are as Sonia portrays - strictly chronological order and one to one correspondence between occurrences and their representation. As it is for Sonia, the mood is

direct narration with the inclusion of direct speech; there is an absence of focalisation and the voice is that of classical subsequent narration. All these features resulting as they do in a bare and mundane narration, Sonia has preserved. Her narration of Naughty Kevin is a long way from her scattered observations about The Little Old Man who Could Not Read.

Holly is a ready talker with a keen interest in Mrs G's stories but her response to the puppet situation in October is to treat it as the occasion for conversation. The ratio of child to adult utterances, as she continually draws me in, is 49 to 72. She produces no stretch of more than two consecutive utterances and continually invites interaction through challenging statements not directly related to the text and through requests for verbal confirmation, attention and information. She also appears to need the guidance of my directive questions to prevent her from flying off in other directions. But by June the ratio of child to adult utterances is 30 to 1 and she needs no explicit verbal invitation to produce a monologue. Her stretch of 17 consecutive utterances would be longer still were it not interrupted by the other child's contribution to the story. This she accommodates without any deviation from her subject matter - the interpretation of the events depicted on the page.

In Holly's October telling of Do You Want to Be My Friend? (Carle 1971) she converts the question of the title into the third person and past tense, changing the mouse, the central character of the printed story, from speaker to addressee. But this question does not provide a frame for her interpretation of the pictures. Instead she intersperses labelling of the animals with rather random reported conversation about being friends. There is no story and no narrative.

In her December telling of Where The Wild Things Are (Sendak 1970) she is not so much labelling as giving an account of a sequence of events. The central character Max, however, is implied rather than introduced in what is a thin and very truncated account, with no real indication of any problem state, turning point or marked terminal state. Other than the proairetic there is no trace of Barthes' codes except perhaps the reference to making "him" the king, which might be seen as symbolic. But Holly's confident phrase "One day morning" carries a hint of intertextuality and the narrative utterances are all consistently in the past tense: Holly has adopted the voice of classical subsequent narration.

Her summer telling of Peter and the Wolf (Hunia 1978) is not so consistent in voice, including seven present tense forms in the middle of the narration, perhaps as a result of the dialogue that immediately precedes them. But in other respects the telling is more fully a narrative than her December attempt. Peter is clearly the central character, and the threat to him and the other peaceable inhabitants of the forest creates a problem state which Peter resolves by capturing the wolf leading to the marked terminal state where the forest is wolf-free. However the elements of the hermeneutic in the warning cries of the printed original, are lost in Holly's rather flat telling and there is no hint of any other of Barthes' codes, or of intertextuality. Rather like Sonia, Holly has produced a competent but mundane narrative but in Holly's case this is to the impoverishment of the original. This should not, however mask the fact that this flat narrative represents a considerable advance over her unstructured comments in October.

Simon is a much noisier and more apparently confident child. In

his October recording of The Tiger Who Came to Tea (Kerr 1973) he produces five consecutive utterances, and the ratio of child to adult utterances is 14:9. After his initial misinterpretation of my request for Charlie to tell us what the story is, as a request for indexical information, he does not need the coaxing or steering that Sonia and Holly require. He rattles off a number of largely inexplicit exclamatory comments, such as "Cor, he's eating that" speedily turning over the pages of the book until he reaches the end with the words "That's it." His 14 utterances are all related to the picture and produced with only one explicit request from me for narrative information after he has begun his story telling. However he does seem to need my accepting responses, and produces in all only 14 utterances. But in May he launches into a monologue needing no invitation and produces one sequence of 28 consecutive utterances, one of 20 and one of 17. His monologue is interrupted only by his own requests for information, my own unsolicited comments and my redirection back to the story after two diversions (one created by another child). The ratio of child to adult utterances is now 105:11. With his "inne?", "dinne" and "eh?"; Simon's monologues retain vestiges of the form of conversation but he appears to be quite content with my silent assent rather than explicit verbal response.

In terms of subject matter, Simon's progress is rather different from Sonia's, since in the autumn he confines himself to comments about what is on the page in front of him, whereas by May he is eager to range beyond this, to related personal experience such as handling slowworms, making Heath's text-to-life and life-to-text moves.

His October telling of The Tiger Who Came to Tea is a recitation of acts of consumption which lead to stomach ache. There is a central

character but no problem state or goal state, thus there is no story. But in May his telling of The Bad Tempered Ladybird (Carle 1977) although not as coherent or tightly controlled as Sonia's telling of Naughty Kevin, is nonetheless a story. The problem state is friendlessness, implied at first and later articulated, and the turning point, heavily marked by Simon's intonation, is where the ladybird finally encounters friends. Although longer and more richly peopled than Sonia's summer narrative, like hers Simon's is devoid of any sign of Barthes' codes, contains no hint of intertextuality and is told in straightforward time relations in the mood of direct narration with only a hint of focalisation and through the voice of classical subsequent narration. Like Sonia's it is a far from complex narrative, but it is a narrative and one which Simon endeavours to make his own through relating it to his own experience.

Richard's progress is rather different. Surprisingly for a dominated twin, a small, quiet and retiring child who does not speak much at story-time, he seems very ready in October to produce a monologue (albeit a short one) without any adult support as he turns over the pages of Do You Want to Be My Friend. Indeed this, his first response to the puppet situation is given when I am temporarily absent from the room. However it consists of four largely inexplicit utterances. It is as if he had some sense of the form of this kind of discourse, but none of its meaning, apart from the necessity of focussing what is on the page in front of him. In neither his spring nor his summer recordings does he solicit or seem in any sense to require any adult support, other than the invitation to begin, and even that is often implicit. He produces monologues of between 21 and 28 utterances, all concerning the picture in front of him, and ignores

any interruptions from other children.

Of course Richard's October story telling can in no way be termed a narrative since there is no central character and no story for the only non-deictic words are the plea of the title. In March he produces a relatively explicit commentary on the pictures in front of him as he turns over the pages of The Three Little Pigs (Hunia 1977a). But there is no clear connecting thread running through his observations: the fox at the beginning has become a wolf at the end. And although he makes extensive use of reference, for much of the time the referents are unclear and on occasion appear to change from one utterance to the next (e.g. 26-28). His 'story-telling' is a recitation of a succession of events through connections that are largely obscure. And no one event appears to have more significance than the others. There is no problem state either stated or implied and no turning point or marked terminal state. Terms such as intertextuality and kernel events have no relevance. And as I have shown in Section 2.4 his use of tense in this telling is highly inconsistent, an indication that he has no stable viewpoint, veering between subsequent and simultaneous narration. However by the July telling of Golidlocks and the Three Bears (Hunia 1977b), the events are no longer a jumbled mass, but an orderly and patterned sequence leading to the turning point of Golidlocks' escape. Although there are no hints of intertextuality or the semic code and although the symbolic code is present in very subdued form, as always the triple recitation of "Who's been eating my porage?" carries with it a hermeneutic quality which Richard appears to savour even if he truncates the chair questions and omits the bed questions. But his telling preserves the tripling in other parts. "Daddy Bear comeback,

Mummy Bear come back and Baby Bear come back." contributing to the patterned texture of the folk tale. Consistently told in the simple past, the telling is in the voice of Genette's classical subsequent narration. Richard has produced a narrative more coherent than Simon's, and longer and fuller than Sonia and Holly's a very marked development from his October attempt.

Interestingly Lee's first recorded story telling in January indicates clearly that like Richard in October, he construes the situation as an invitation to produce a monologue. But his monologue, as he turns the pages of Do You Want to Be My Friend, is considerably more extensive and informative than Richard's in October, and far more like the other children's winter story-tellings. The ratio of child to adult utterances is 39 to 2 and the longest stretch of consecutive utterances is 15. Indeed in these terms there is no marked development between Lee's January and June storytelling: in June the figures are 19 to 3 and 14 respectively, and in this lack of change he also resembles Richard.

But in terms of narrative structure there are some significant changes. In January Lee announces that his book is "about a snake" and then produces a series of often fragmentary utterances, inserting between labelling utterances the unexplained idea of "a trick". There is a central character, but no problem state, turning point or marked terminal state. The tenses are a mixture of past and present indicating absence of a consistent narrative voice, and there are no signs of intertextuality or any of Barthes' codes. However in June he produces a clear and coherent account of Peter and the Wolf with not only the story features that Holly includes, but as I have shown in Section 2.2, echoes of the printed text in the phrase "a duck under

water and a fish deep under water." There is also a semic hint in his first mention of the wolf. Lee too has gained some mastery of narrative structure.

The changes from conversation to monologue are shown in Table 10.7.

Table 10.6

Features marking the transition from conversation to monologue

Feature	Season	Sonia	Holly	Simon	Richard	Lee
A	autumn	13:27	49:72	14:9	4:0	
	winter/spring	14:11	36:13	31:7	28:1	39:2
	summer	9:3	30:1	105:11	22:1	19:3
B	autumn	3	2	5	4	
	winter/spring	10	13	17	18	15
	summer	6	17	28	22	14
C	autumn	6	11	1	0	
	winter/spring	0	2	3	0	0
	summer	0	0	1	0	0

A ratio of child to adult utterances

B greatest number of consecutive child utterances

C incidence of adult's questioning prompts after start of child's 'story'

The use of tense is an interesting indicator of the narrator's voice. As I have indicated, all the children move towards the use of

the past tense of classical subsequent narration as is shown in Table 10.7 below. Since my concern is with the standpoint of the narrator, under the heading of 'present' I have included the form that Halliday terms the past-in-present, as well as the simple present and the present-in-present (Kress 1976 p 153). Excluding all direct speech and clearly non-narrative utterances, in the October recordings, only Holly makes any use of a past tense but by the winter months all use this to some extent and Holly uses nothing else. By the summer the past tense predominates for all children except Simon.

Table 10.7

Ratio of present to past tense forms

Season	Sonia	Holly	Simon	Richard	Lee
autumn	4:0	3:3	6:0	1:0	
winter/spring	2:5	0:11	7:2	7:4	3:3
summer	1:8	6:7	4:2	0:10	1:9

There is one further point to note. In October all four children recorded show no intonational differentiation between their conversational and 'story-telling' utterances. By the summer recordings there is a marked difference in that there is a complex patterning that operates over the whole narrative; opening sentences sound markedly different from closing sentences and both sound different from the accompanying conversation.

Studies of discourse tend to look either at conversation or at

narrative, as if they were autonomous genres with distinct origins. And yet for these children narrative appears to grow out of conversation. The preceding examination of these storytellings shows something of this process, hinted at in Table 10.6 above. For all the children except Richard, whose preoccupation in the autumn is with form rather than content, the autumn storytellings are conversations, chains of exchanges, most of which are initiated by myself. However as the year progresses each story telling has the appearance not so much of a chain of exchanges as of one large exchange albeit still initiated by myself, either explicitly or implicitly. In the autumn all three children concerned seem to see the end of each brief exchange as the signal that they are free to lapse into silence or to initiate a new exchange on a related topic as is legitimate in conversation. But by the summer, all five appear to recognise that the invitation to tell a story initiates an exchange that is not complete until a narrative has been presented in its entirety. There may be some conversational interaction between the initiation and the completion of the response, as there is in the summer storytellings of Simon, Lee and Holly, but this appears to be seen as a temporary diversion from the business of narrative construction, which must be returned to and completed. Lee and Holly need no reminders. Even Simon needs only one reminder, spontaneously returning to his narration after five other conversational interludes. It is as if the children are developing a hierarchical sense of an ordering of discourse more powerful than the chaining of their conversations, and a notion of narrative that permits judgements of relevance and completeness and allows the speaker (and implicitly the hearer) to use the whole to gloss the parts. This sense of a larger whole will

perhaps enable them to make greater sense of individual sentences in the texts they subsequently read themselves. And, more generally, the ability to construct a story world with its own logic and laws will enable them to take a wider view of and more hypothetical stance to the problems and realities they encounter in school.

2.5

Conclusions on the children's storytellings

Over the period of observation all five children studied in detail appear to make substantial moves towards a competent handling of narrative. As is shown in Table 10.8 below, the language they produce in the story telling situation becomes more explicit, more elaborated and more complete and complex in terms of sentence structure. There are changes also in the ratio of child to adult utterances, in the number of consecutive utterances, in the number of adult questioning prompts and a tense shift from present to past.

Table 10.8

Movement towards narrative language in terms of features discussed

Feature	Sonia	Holly	Simon	Richard	Lee
A	+	0	+	+	+
B	+	0	-	0	-
C	+	0	0	0	0
D	+	0	+	+	+
E	+	+	0	+	+
F	+	+	0	+	+
G	+	0	+	+	+
H	+	+	+	0	-
J	0	+	+	+	0
K	+	+	0	0	0
L	+	0	0	+	+

+	marked positive change, consistent over all tellings
-	negative change
0	no marked change
A	incidence of exophoric reference
B	incidence of exophoric determiners
C	incidence of omitted subject
D	incidence of elaborative adverbials
E	incidence of lexically modified noun phrases
F	incidence of incomplete SPCA structures
G	incidence of clauses additional to main clauses
H	ratio of child to adult utterances
J	greatest number of consecutive utterances
K	incidence of adult questioning prompts after start of story
L	ratio of present to past tense forms

As I have suggested, these changing features are only the superficial symptoms of a deeper change from the structure, semantics and structural configurations of conversation, towards those of written narrative. All the children recorded in the Autumn, even

Richard, produce the language of informal conversation. However by the summer all are producing monologues that are narrative in form and content. Some make more dramatic shifts than others. But in Wells' words they have all learnt

to create and explore alternative possible worlds with
their own coherence and logic
(Wells 1982 p 185)

It could be argued that engaging in story telling has contributed to the growth of the children's narrative competence. Indeed it would be hard to argue otherwise. But Lee, who does not involve himself in much 'story reading' in the classroom, does not choose to engage in storytelling with the puppets until January and so misses out on this experience. Nevertheless in terms of the features itemised above, with the sole exception of sentence structure, Lee's January storytelling resembles more the winter or spring storytellings of the other children than their efforts in October. Other influences must be at work. Thus this examination provides a clear justification for regarding Mrs G's classroom as a place where the language of written narrative is nurtured.

Before turning to examine the features of Mrs G's classroom that might foster the growth of this familiarity with written language, I present a second source of evidence for such familiarity - the findings from my one formal assessment of the children. This took place in July when I tested all 19 children present on a sub-set of items from Clay's Concepts of Print test (Clay 1972). The children found some of the tests wording confusing, especially item 4 "which way does it go?". Since 'go' is a synonym for 'say' in the local dialect, many seemed to interpret the item as "What does it say?". They also found the manipulation of cards required on item 21 and

beyond, very difficult and it is possible that consequently some did not fully reveal their knowledge of words and letters. Nevertheless, on the 15 items tested, scores ranged between 2 and 9 with a mean for all children of 4.2. For those children of 4.5 and over (the oldest being Glenda at 4.10) the range was the same, but the mean was 5.1. This result compares very favourably with those of Wells' Bristol study - a range of 2 to 5 and a mean of 3.15 in children tested at 5 years (Wells and Raban 1978). It should be remembered that a proportion of Wells' subjects came from middle-class homes whereas all these children came from working class homes.

3

The book environment of the classroom

3.1

Book provision and access

In the year in question Mrs G's nursery classroom is exceptionally well stocked with books, containing rather more than a hundred volumes at any one time, but rather fewer titles since there are a number of different versions of such old favourites as Goldilocks and Peter and the Wolf. The titles change somewhat over the year since the permanent nursery stock is supplemented by books from the public library on long-term loan, from the school library and from Mrs G's home. These books are arranged for maximal accessibility, either on display shelves, or in boxes at browsing height, both placed at focal points in the classroom, near the rug where the children gather regularly. The children are encouraged to look at books during all indoor free-play sessions. The use they make of this opportunity is

examined in Section 3.3 below.

3.2

Story reading by an adult to a small group

Mrs G and her various helpers frequently share books with small knots of children. From their earliest days in the classroom some of the children find this an attractive activity, and often press adults to read to them. The close and cosy nature of the story-reading group, almost always on the floor, its adult involvement and its insulation from surrounding activity, seem key features of this attraction. One of the children is usually on the adults' knee and others nestle close. All can see the pictures in detail and it is relatively easy for children to make a verbal contribution to the story telling. And yet these cosy groups are essentially unstable. The banging of plasticene and noisy shouts from a model car game might seize a participant's attention as indeed might the bright colours of a jigsaw puzzle or the cover of another book. It also seems that in a free-choice situation the very attractiveness of this activity is part of its undoing. Children wander up to join the cosy group, thereby making it too large to preserve the original intimacy and provoking fragmentation. An extract of my observational record for Feb 4th 1981 illustrates this clearly.

- 9.05 Mrs G sits down with Christine (holding puppet Charlie), Simon, Sonia (holding puppet Bill), Darren and Andrew to read Bedtime for Frances (Hoban 1963).
- 9.06 Janet strolls up to join in. Alison is standing nearby flapping a book.
- 9.07 Tracey joins group and sits down. Serene sits nearby in

Mrs G's chair, listening. Christine is looking more at Charlie than at Mrs G.

- 9.08 Lee and Richard join group. Serene and Alison are now looking at Mr. Magnolia (Blake 1981).
- 9.09 Christine and Darren are now looking at other books. They forget their books and turn back to Mrs G.
- 9.10 Darren bats Christine with book. Christine takes 6 books out of shelf.
- 9.11 Tracey, hurt in crossfire between Darren and Christine, wanders off.
- 9.13 Darren pushes Sonia away. Christine wanders off with pile of books.
- 9.14 Story ends.

This self-chosen group has had a story-reading very different from the kind Anna experiences with her mother. Only two children seem able to give the story their uninterrupted attention, Simon and Andrew who anyway has extensive experience of being read to at home. The fluidity of these storytellings does not appear to change markedly over the year.

3.3

Story 'reading' by children

However other book related activities do change. In October Mrs G regards it as noteworthy when any child sits down to look at a book. For most children in the early months such story 'reading' activity is embedded in role play about being the teacher. Typically one child sits in Mrs G's chair with one or two others beside or in front of her

and 'reads' to these others, often using Mrs G's formula for starting a class story "sit on your bottoms".

But in the latter part of October certain children start to 'read' books to themselves without the trappings of this teacher role play. A few look at a book intently, but silently. Most, and their number increases as the year progresses, talk their way through their chosen books, often in little co-operative groups of two or three. Without radio microphones it is virtually impossible to record these often softly spoken spontaneous 'readings'. So faint tape recordings are supplemented with written notes to achieve a few fragmentary transcriptions over the year. These are very similar in terms of the features examined, to the contemporaneous story telling with the puppets explored in Section 2, as is shown by transcripts of two co-operative 'readings' presented in Appendix 5. Told in December and May, both involve Rebecca and Glenda. The December 'reading' moves between explicitness and reliance on shared experience, present and past tenses, narrating fragments of the story and labelling the pictures. In the summer reading there is a clear distinction, signalled by intonation, between the conversational utterances and the narration, in which each word is clearly enunciated and accompanied by finger pointing, sometimes achieving comparatively successful matching of spoken to written text.

There is no steady upward movement in the incidence and duration of this activity since its growth is interrupted by such concerns as preparations for Christmas and sportsday. But whereas a single book 'reading' is noteworthy in December, at the end of a morning in June all except three of the children in the room are immersed in books, individually 'reading' their stories aloud, Glenda singing her Mouse

Tales (Lobel 1973).

3.4

The school book-shop

Many of the books in which the children are immersed that June morning have been brought by them from the school bookshop in a scheme that seems to fit the financial lives of these children and their parents. Early in the school year Mrs G makes it known that each child has a saving book in which money can be entered every morning. Each Tuesday those with enough saved can go to an otherwise superfluous classroom where a parent runs a bookshop under a teacher's direction. While purchase is uneven, this scheme does result in a number of children possessing over 20 books at the end of the year. However their buying seems rather haphazard. Although on occasion as does Richard one morning in March, a child may have a fixed intention to buy a particular title (in his case The Three Little Pigs) more often the children seem to focus more on the transaction with the lady at the desk who marks their cards and puts their books in bags, than on choosing a book for its content. They seem indeed, to choose their books almost at random, sometimes attracted by the picture on the cover, sometimes by its shininess. Only if the book is familiar do they appear to look at it carefully. Perhaps things would be otherwise if it were Mrs G, rather than her helper Mrs P, who took the children to buy books.

Certainly the book buying increases as the year progresses. Only one or two buy a book in any week in October, but twelve out of the sixteen present buy a book on a Tuesday morning in June, although two of these are dot to dot books, all the children can afford.

This book purchase has considerable significance, in that it leads to an alteration of the children's home environment. Many of them are, at under five years, acquiring their own personal libraries, larger than those of many middle class five year olds in Wells' Bristol study (Wells and Raban 1978). Summer interviews with five parents show that four of the five children ask to be read to almost every day, a request usually met by the mother, but sometimes by the grandmother or elder sibling. The fifth child, Sonia, used to but now insists on 'reading' for herself. The parents all emphasise that most of the books have come from the school bookshop and that this story reading has developed since the child started in nursery class.

3.5

The teacher as a model reader to children

However it is not simply the presence of books in the home that has led to these almost daily reading sessions. Mrs G has a policy of inviting parents into her classroom, of involving them in activities with the children and of treating them with consideration and respect. This elicits such unsolicited comments as "she doesn't put herself above the parent. She looks at a parent and knows something's wrong". (Sonia's mother) "she looks at your face and really listens to you." (Lee's mother) This appears to mean that parents are prepared to treat Mrs G with respect and to learn from her about how to share a book with a child. Mrs G is for these children's mothers, a model story teller and thus her influence extends well beyond the walls of her classroom.

A selective diachronic analysis of Mrs G's class story readings

I now turn to an examination of Mrs G's class story sessions. As a thorough systemic analysis of four story readings, more complex than those of Anna's home, could constitute a thesis in itself. And as I have established in Chapter 9 that there are marked differences in terms of semantics, structural configurations and discourse structure between the conversation of mother and child and the narrative that is embedded in it, it seems unprofitable to tread over similar ground. Clearly a selective approach is necessary, one that will identify where the school story readings differ from those of the home. Because of the greater number of participants and the formal setting of the school, there is a distinctiveness about the situation which one might expect to be strongly realized in the discourse structure. So an examination of the situation and of the discourse structure are the tools I use to articulate what is happening in the school readings. I have chosen one story reading from each quarter of the year, selected on the criterion of clarity of the recording and referred to as Reading 1, 2 etc. The books involved are in order Do You Want to Be My Friend? (Carle 1971), Where the Wild Things Are (Sendak 1970) Rosie's Walk (Hutchins 1970) and Fish is Fish (Leonna 1970), referred to as DY, WT, RW and FF respectively.

4.1

Analysis of situation

The situation of these story readings is protected. Mrs G does not set herself up in competition with the attractions of the plasticene or the brick box. Toys are put away and adult helpers

expected, if they must move about, to tiptoe around the backs of the listening children. Early on in the school year the children come to know that they are expected to sit on the mat and focus their attention on what Mrs G is saying and showing them. Deviant behaviour is tolerated in the occasional new child, but like many nursery teachers, Mrs G tries to ensure that a helper sits with any child who might disturb others. These efforts are not always entirely successful: children from another class enter in cow costumes in one story reading and in Reading 1 the milkman comes in, but, like the children dressed as cows, he is expected to wait until the story's end before taking Mrs G's attention.

4.1.1

Field

The field of these story tellings sets them off from the other events of the morning. It does not involve any of the physical activities or apparatus that abounds in this classroom. The field consists of the story itself. Like Anna's mother, Mrs G wishes to take the children's minds away from their immediate physical surroundings and help them enter a world constructed through words and pictures alone. Each morning she asks the children to spend some ten minutes with her in each other's mental company in a world created by their interactions with the book she is holding in her hands.

4.1.2

Tenor

Unlike story-time in Anna's home, the tenor of this situation is not markedly more formal than that of other situations in which the

participants interact. What formality there is, is caused partly by large numbers: Mrs G is dealing not with individuals or a small group, but with 20 children or so. And yet there is less formality than in some small group activities such as sorting shapes or number work. One of the children is usually sitting on Mrs G's knee, another may turn the pages. The tenor is ordered cosiness rather than formality. And Mrs G does not seem to defer to the author in quite the same way as Anna's mother.

4.1.3

Mode

Surprisingly the mode appears less like monologue than a kind of dialogue. In none of the four story readings does Mrs G produce a sequence of more than four consecutive narrative utterances without a contribution of some sort from a child. The authors have written monologues, but in her reading Mrs G is converting these to dialogues.

4.1.4

Thus the situation is orderly, but informal. It has a tight boundary in that children are expected to stay with the story reading, not wander away to other activities, nor intrude other activities or concerns into the story reading. Attempts to do so are ignored or rebuffed as when an unidentified child tries to engage Mrs G in a conversation about her/his cat Tiddles during the reading of Where the Wild Things Are and is rebuffed by Mrs G with the words

We're not talking about cats now, we're talking
about wild things.

Teacher WT 215

There is no room for the tolerance Anna's mother displays towards Anna's preoccupation with the coins in her lap. Around the informality of its tenor and mode lies the formal boundary of the field.

At home Anna chooses the stories her mother reads. Here sometimes it is Mrs G and sometimes one of the children. Do You Want to Be My Friend? and Fish is Fish are both new and chosen by Mrs G. Rosie's Walk is familiar and chosen by Darren and Where the Wild Things Are is new and chosen by Christine. It is not clear what guides the children's choice when the book is to be read for the first time, but the teacher's choice involves accessibility, topicality and the lessons about text that a particular book can teach. For both, however, enjoyment is paramount. The chooser must believe the chosen book will be enjoyable.

4.2

Discourse structure

I analyse the discourse structure of these four story readings by first examining the potential structures of the narratives then the structure of the conversation between teacher and children and thirdly the relation between these two.

4.2.1

The potential structures of the narratives

Two of the four texts, Rosie's Walk and Where the Wild Things Are, have been analysed in Section 5.1 of the home study. Here as there I conclude that both are picture books in which the story (more or less following Beaugrande and Colby's rules) is told through pictures as

well as (or in the case of Rosie's Walk rather more than) through the printed text and both embody a twentieth century view of the world appropriate for children. Rosie's Walk belongs to a genre closely related to the folk tales of an earlier oral tradition, whereas Where the Wild Things Are belongs to the rather more complex and recent genre of the psychological children's story. Neither contains more than a hint of intertextuality, the verbal narration includes no satellite events and there are only the thinnest traces of Barthes' hermeneutic and semic codes although in Where the Wild Things Are the symbolic code is more in evidence. There is very little variation in terms of time relations and mood, and the voice is consistently that of classical narration.

Do You Want to Be My Friend? read by Mrs G in October, is rather simpler. The verbal narrative consists of the words of the title, asked at the beginning by an enquiring mouse, and the 'yes' he finds after a series of encounters with a variety of exotic animals, when he finally meets another mouse. And yet these words and the pictures around and between them, together contain a story with a problem state, a clearly indicated goal state, a turning point and a resolution. And the pictures represent more than the kernel events of these encounters. At the bottom of every page lies a section of a snake who curls round menacingly at the end, but plays no part in advancing or impeding the mouse's search. Through the pictures run the semic and hermeneutic codes, for the mouse meets every new creature tail first: the reader sees only the tail and must turn the page in order to be sure of the creature's identity. Although the time relations are straightforward and one cannot speak of narrative voice where there is no verbal narration, there is an implicit

focalisation through the consciousness of the mouse as he scampers anxiously across the pages in his search for a friend.

Fish is Fish, read in May is rather more complex. The central character, a minnow, finds himself in a problem state when his 'inseparable' friend the tadpole grows legs and leaves him behind as he hops off to see the world. When the frog returns to tell of the wonders he has seen, the fish decides that he must go off and see these for himself, with predictable consequences. As he lies gasping on the bank, the turning point comes when his friend pushes him back into the water, leaving the fish to accept his own world and its limitations with the words "Fish is Fish". However at the beginning of the story, the goal state of acceptance of his condition is only hinted at rather than clearly articulated. Like Where the Wild Things Are, Fish is Fish belongs to the genre of the psychological children's story and perhaps it is for this reason that Beaugrande and Colby's rules do not fit it neatly. At 46 sentences, the narrative text is longer than any of the others but in Barthes' terms it concerns only kernel events: there are no satellites. However as in Rosie's Walk the pictures, of fish-like children sucking lollipops or riding on the back of fish-like cows, represent in arresting detail satellite events that have no function in furthering the central pattern of action. As to intertextuality, "the woods" that feature at the start may suggest other woods in other stories, but this is all. And there are only the thinnest traces of Barthes hermeneutic and semic codes, and none at all of the symbolic code. There is, however, some variation in time relations, both in terms of duration and order. Variations in duration are common enough, and very evident in Where the Wild Things Are but the variation in order comes about because of the diegetic

narrative, the narrative within the narrative as the frog tells of his adventures in the wide world. This of course also varies the voice of classical narration which shapes the rest of the text, and brings about some variety in mood, as the main narrative is focalised through the wistful perspective of the fish whereas the diegetic narrative is presented through the exuberant consciousness of the frog.

To see what teacher and children make of these potential structures we need to examine their talk, but first I examine the structure of these interactions per se.

4.2.2

The structure of the conversation

Separating these transcripts into narrative and conversational utterances is not as straightforward as in the home study as Mrs G does not always make a clear distinction between the two. She does not always reproduce the exact words of the printed text, but often paraphrases these or adds to them in ways that draw the narration nearer to the conversational utterances. For example,

That very night in Max's bedroom,
a forest grew.
A wood grew with all these trees.
Teacher WT 113 and 115

However since the second utterance is delivered in the same tone of voice as the first, and uses the same tense, I class it unequivocally as narrative. Sometimes she moves from narrative to conversation or vice versa within an utterance.

He gave up being king of where the
wild things are and where d'you
think he went?
Teacher WT 270

If we omit all utterances that are solely narration, including the children's contributions, and also all those consisting solely of an 'oh' or 'ah' following a narrative utterance, and those composed of non lexical sounds or too few identifiable words to permit classification, we are left with 953 conversational utterances which I have grouped into 561 exchanges.

The discourse of these story tellings has a disorderly appearance lacking the turntaking pattern of both Anna's experience at home and the classroom story readings noted by Wood et al (1980) and Tizard and Hughes (1984). Far from being "better ordered at school than at home" as Tizard and Hughes found, these story readings seem almost chaotic. There is a very high incidence of overlapping speech and interruptions. Inside the protected situation she has constructed Mrs G does not sit holding forth to a spell-bound group, but often appears to be talking against a babble of counter-talk. Much of this talk I have been unable to transcribe, but have noted its presence, and some of the overlapping utterances are multiple responses to a single initiation. But discounting both these categories and also those occasions where the teacher resumes the narrative before other talkers have stopped, we are still left with a large number of interruptions as Table 10.9 shows.

Table 10.9

Incidence of interruptions in class story readings

Story	Z	Interruptions			A as % of Z
		A	B	C	
DY	181	12	6	6	6.6
WT	110	13	11	2	11.8
RW	132	27	25	2	20.5
FF	138	37	36	1	26.8

Z total number of exchanges

A totals

B child initiated

C teacher initiated

Not only do interruptions abound; they increase markedly between October and May, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of all exchanges.

Many of these 'exchanges' consist solely of an initiation. While a number of these such as

Richard, come on sit on your bottom

Teacher WT1

are more appropriately completed by actions rather than words, and others consist of the giving of information which needs no verbal acknowledgement, other one-part 'exchanges' are clearly incomplete, as when Desmond asks

Where the hands are?

Desmond FF53

and Mrs G carries on with the narrative. In many cases classification is a more delicate matter. To keep this as consistent as possible, I restrict the category 'incomplete' to exchanges consisting of initiations offering information, cut short before the information has been specified, and those requesting a verbal response which is not forthcoming. The following table sets these incomplete exchanges against those that are verbally completed, that is where initiations are followed by responses.

Table 10.10

Distribution of incomplete and verbally completed exchanges

Story	Z	A	A as % of Z	B	B as % of Z
DY	181	21	11.6	92	50.8
WT	110	10	9.0	49	44.5
RW	132	12	9.1	42	31.8
FF	138	10	7.9	33	23.9

Z total number of exchanges
A incomplete exchanges
B verbally completed exchanges

As the table shows, the percentage of incomplete exchanges does not markedly decrease, instead the percentages of all verbally completed exchanges drops sharply between Reading 1 and Reading 4. Is Mrs G encouraging verbal anarchy?

4.2.2.1

Ideational patterns within and between exchanges

If we examine the commodities teacher and children are dealing in, the impression of disorder is somewhat modified. Although some of the exchanges concern irrelevancies (blue jumpers as well as cats) and others concern management (Lee and Christine both frequently misbehave) and orientation towards the story reading, many more are more centrally related to it. A minority of those apparently related are actually distractions in that they concern elements from the story but treated in a centrifugal way that has no relevance to the developing narrative. The remaining story related exchanges I divide into three categories - those concerned with the conventions of reading (principally page turning) those concerned with the mental processes of making sense of the narrative, that is with thinking, wondering, finding out and being right or wrong, and finally those concerned with building the narrative, interpreting the words and pictures on the page. Many of the exchanges, particularly those that deal with mental processes, are multivalent, and carry a second and sometimes third and even fourth commodity. When Mrs G says

Let's open the page and see what happens in this story

Teacher FF 16

she is dealing simultaneously in managing a restless group of children, orientation to story reading, the conventions of reading and the mental processes of making sense of a narrative. Others, while not totally irrelevant, belong to miscellaneous intermediate categories such as phatic communication, and so to classify the exchanges in terms of the principal categories is not to arrive at a neat distribution adding up to the total number of exchanges. But

nonetheless Table 10.11 is informative, showing where the ideational weight of these exchanges lies. At each reading over 50% of the exchanges concern construction of the narrative.

Table 10.11

Distribution of commodities over exchanges

Story	Initiator	Z	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	G as % of Z
DY	both	181	3	20	22	2	25	69	94	52
	child	39	1	0	2	2	4	8	26	66.7
	teacher	142	2	20	20	0	21	61	68	47.9
WT	both	110	11	12	10	2	9	17	65	59.1
	child	36	9	0	3	2	0	1	21	58.3
	teacher	74	2	12	7	0	9	16	44	59.5
RW	both	132	11	27	19	0	11	15	68	51.5
	child	52	11	6	7		1	2	29	46.8
	teacher	70	0	21	12		10	13	39	55.7
FF	both	138	5	7	16	18	5	26	88	63.8
	child	75	4	1	2	17	0	5	46	61.3
	teacher	63	1	6	14	1	5	21	42	66.7

Z total number of exchanges
A irrelevant
B management
C orientation

D centrifugal
E conventions
F mental processes
G construction of narrative

As the table shows, the distribution of these commodities changes throughout the year. Both the exchanges concerned with irrelevancies and those concerned with management fluctuate in ways that are explained as much by the children's current preoccupations and moods as by the history of story-time. The high number of exchanges concerned with management in Reading 3 is explained as the transcript shows, by a game which acts as an overture to the story reading and accounts for all but two of these exchanges. There is less fluctuation in the exchanges concerned with orientation, where the patterning seems unremarkable. The number of centrifugal exchanges increases dramatically in Reading 4. These concern elements of the narrative carried away from the narrative context. Perhaps Fish is Fish provides a richer source for such pickings than do the other stories. Certainly it is a complex narrative with many elements that are familiar to the children from their first hand experience and yet remain problematic and interesting. Many of them have fish, have seen frogs and know something of their strange ways.

The exchanges concerned with the conventions of reading reduce fairly steadily throughout the year, from 25 in Reading 1 to only five in Reading 4. Nearly all of these concern turning the page and Mrs G it seems, rightly assumes in May that the children are by now familiar with the page order of English orthography. There is a similar but less steady decrease in the much more varied exchanges that concern the mental processes of making sense of the written and pictorial texts. Again it would seem that in October Mrs G finds it necessary to talk explicitly about thinking and finding out whereas by May she can assume they are engaged in these processes now largely internalised and it is necessary to voice them only at key points in

the narrative. In this connection the incidence of mental verbs is informative and is shown in Table 10.12

Table 10.12

Incidence of mental verbs

Story	Speaker	think	wonder	know	see*/find out	imagine/ fancy
DY	both	48	7	8	15	0
	child	1	0	1	1	
	teacher	47	7	7	14	0
WT	both	13	1	3	1	1
	child	0	0	0	0	0
	teacher	13	1	3	1	1
RW	both	12	0	4	0	0
	child	0	0	1	0	0
	teacher	12	0	3	0	0
FF	both	9	0	6	6	2
	child	0	0	1	0	0
	teacher	9	0	5	6	2

*used to mean 'find out'

As for those exchanges concerned directly with the construction of the

narrative, the pattern is clear. As a percentage of all exchanges they increase steadily throughout the year. The interruptions may have increased but a higher proportion of the exchanges are now directly concerned with the narrative.

Continuity of commodity within and between exchanges

A small number of exchanges have their commodity modified. Mrs G's modifications always shift the commodity towards the mental process of making sense of a text. Thus in all the readings she extends a few exchanges dealing with the construction of the narrative to include the mental processes involved. And in the instance already cited from Reading 2 of the child pre-occupied with her/his cat's name, the commodity is firmly switched to talk itself, with a rule for the admissability to the discourse of story-time made clearly explicit with the words

We're not talking about cats now
we're talking about wild things.

Teacher WT 215

In Reading 3 an exchange concerned with management is extended to include relevant mental processes

Desmond She's smacking my head
Teacher Really I think she's getting *****
She doesn't like what you're saying
about the story

RW 270-272

The children's modifications tend to reduce the commodity: their responses to initiations dealing in both mental processes and narrative construction almost invariably exclude the mental processes. Less frequently they shift the commodity from the construction of narrative to centrifugal as in their responses to Mrs G's complex

question in Reading 2.

If you wanted to be with somebody
who loved you best of all, where
would you want to be?

Teacher WT 258

But in the vast majority of exchanges the commodity remains constant.

As to continuity between exchanges, as Table 10.13 shows, very many of the exchanges fall into sequences of two or more sharing the same commodity.

Table 10.13

Incidence of sequences of exchanges with continuity of commodity

Story	Z	Number of exchanges in sequence											A	A as % of Z
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	14		
DY	181	23	8	2	2	3	2	1	1				137	75.7
WT	110	5	5	1	2		1		1				55	50
RW	132	5	2	1	1		1			1	1	1	73	55.3
FF	198	5	4	3	1	1	2	1		1	1		88	65.8

Z total number of exchanges

A total number of exchanges in sequences

In each reading over half the exchanges fall into such sequences. Although from Reading 2 there is a steady increase in this proportion, it never rises above the proportion of Reading 1. It should be noted, however, that the proportion of child-initiated exchanges is far lower in Reading 1. In October it is Mrs G who ensures continuity. By May

the children have joined her in this enterprise.

There is one further form of ideational continuity. During the story readings topics are not always explored and left behind. In Reading 1, when someone ventures that what is actually a fox's tail might belong to a lion, Mrs G reminds them

We've already had a lion

Teacher DY 405

harking back to an exchange nearly 100 exchanges before the present one. In Reading 4, referring to Simon as Lee, Mrs G recalls his prediction that the pond weeds would turn into flowers, which she has earlier cast doubt on. At the end Lee refers back to the fish's rescue by the frog which he had accurately predicted. In both these cases there are intervals of between 25 and 30 exchanges between those connected in this way.

And of course the connections run deeper than this. The narrative itself connects all the story-related exchanges in ways that are explored in Section 4.2.3. The kind of discourse teacher and children are engaging in is characterised by strong ideational coherence operating both within and above the level of the exchange and creating structures that can only be fully explored by an examination of the narrative.

4.2.2.2

Interpersonal patterning

The children in Mrs G's class participate actively in all her story readings, but the nature of this participation changes over the school year in ways that move it towards something rather different from the type of interaction found to typify nursery and reception

classrooms in other studies (Wood et al 1980, MacLure and French 1981, Tizard and Hughes 1984).

Table 10.14

Distribution of exchanges by initiation

Story	Total no. of exchanges	Child initiated		Teacher initiated	
		number	% of total	number	% of total
DY	181	39	21.5	142	78.5
WT	110	36	32.7	74	67.3
RW	132	62	47	70	53
FF	138	75	54.3	63	45.7

The first point to note is, as Table 10.14 shows, the children increasingly take the initiative. Far from being socialised into a secondary responding role they are increasingly assertive. The percentage of child initiated exchanges in each story reading changes from 21.7 in October to 53.9 in May, a dramatic increase that suggests an interactive dynamic in Mrs G's classroom very different from that found by Wood et al., MacLure and French and Tizard and Hughes (op. cit.). An examination of the distribution of verbally completed exchanges, as shown in Table 10.15, provides a partial explanation.

Table 10.15

Distribution of verbally completed exchanges by initiator

Story	All verbally completed exchanges	Child initiated		Teacher initiated	
		number	% of total	number	% of total
DY	92	23	25	69	75
WT	49	14	28.6	35	71.4
RW	42	23	54.8	19	45.2
FF	33	22	66.7	11	33.3

Mrs G is clearly declaring their initiations legitimate by according them responses even on occasion, when their initiations interrupt her as in the beginning of Fish is Fish

Teacher And { I think this is
 Simon { Is that seaweed?
 Teacher Yes
 FF 19-21.

But perhaps the most striking interpersonal feature is the changing incidence, distribution and nature of questions. Not all interrogatives can be classed as questions, nor do all questions take syntactically or even intonationally interrogative forms, but using as an operational definition those initiations that provide the basis for a proposition and invite a completing verbal response, the incidence of questions drops from 82 in Reading 1 to 16 in Reading 4, as is shown in the table below. (I have excluded initiations that include tag questions which do not appear to invite an overt response and

responses that include tag questions that appear to function as acknowledgements).

Table 10.16

Incidence and distribution of questions by initiator

Story	Z	Questions				
		A	B	B as % of A	C	C as % of A
DY	181	81	4	4.9	77	95.1
WT	110	44	6	13.6	38	86.4
RW	132	34	6	17.6	28	82.4
FF	138	16	8	50	8	50

Z total number of exchanges

A all

B child initiated

C teacher initiated

In October nearly half the exchanges involve questions and Mrs G asks 95% of them. In May there are far fewer and those few are spread evenly between teacher and children. But there has been no substantial increase in the number of child-initiated questions. Teacher and children appear to be moving away from a question asking mode and from the asymmetry of Reading 1. Most of these questions are answered verbally, (including a few cases where Mrs G answers herself), some might be answered by a nod, glance, raised eyebrow or

wave of the hand, but others are clearly ignored as Table 10.17 shows.

Table 10.17

Distribution of answered and unanswered questions

Story Initiator		Questions								
		A	B	B as % of A	C	C as % of A	D	D as % of A	E	E as % of A
DY	all	81	62	76.5	1	1.2	4	4.9	14	17.3
	child	4	1	25					3	75
	teacher	77	61	79.2	1	1.3	4	5.2	11	14.3
WT	all	44	31	70.5	1	2.3	8	18.2	4	9.1
	child	6	3	50			1	17	2	33
	teacher	38	28	73.7	1	2.6	7	18.4	2	5.3
RW	all	34	22	64.7	5	14.7	2	5.9	5	14.7
	child	6	3	50			1	17	2	33
	teacher	28	19	67.8	5	17.9	1	3.6	3	10.7
FF	all	16	9	56.3	1	6.3	2	12.5	4	25
	child	8	4	50			1	12.5	3	37.5
	teacher	8	5	62.5	1	12.5	1	12.5	1	12.5
A	all questions					D	possibly answered non-verbally			
B	answered verbally by another					E	unanswered			
C	answered by initiator									

The pattern remains relatively unchanged throughout the year. Between 60 and 79 per cent of Mrs G's questions are answered verbally by the children. Between 25 and 50 per cent of the small number of children's questions receive the same treatment. Only a small percentage of the teacher's questions remain unanswered in any way, but between 30 and 75 percent of the small number of children's questions are ignored. Mrs G does not appear to be responding to questions as generously as she does to the children's other initiations. Perhaps this is why their questions do not increase in step with their initiations generally.

Before considering this further it is informative to look at the distribution of roles with respect to the information at issue, at whether the questions represent the teacher as primary knower, secondary knower or as of equal status with the children. Some of these questions seem to be concerned with channel checking, either asking for confirmation or repetition of information not clearly received or ascertaining that others can see a particular part of a picture and so to note the questioner's status as knower in these cases is not particularly informative. The incidence of these and the distribution of the remaining questions between the three kinds of status is set out in Table 10.18 below.

Table 10.18

Distribution of questions in terms of channel checking and status as knower of participants

Story	Initiator	Questions								
		A	B	B as %	C	C as %	D	D as %	E	E as %
		of A			of A		of A		of A	
DY	all	81	13	16	28	34.6	36	44.4	4	4.9
	child	4			4	100				
	teacher	77	13	16.9	24	31.2	36	46.8	4	5.2
WT	all	44	5	11.4	17	38.6	9	20.5	13	29.5
	child	6	1	16.7	3	50			2	33.3
	teacher	38	4	10.5	14	36.8	9		11	28.9
RW	all	34	6	17.6	13	38.2	11	32.3	4	11.8
	child	6			5	83.3	1	16.7		
	teacher	28	6	21.4	8	28.6	10	35.7	4	14.3
FF	all	16	4	25	4	25	5	31.3	3	18.8
	child	8	1	12.5	4	50	2	25	1	12.5
	teacher	8	3	37.5			3	37.5	2	25

A all questions

B channel checking

C teacher as primary knower

D teacher and children as of equal status

E child as primary knower

The children tend to use their questions to ask Mrs G for information they do not have, seeing her as the primary knower. Thus Holly asks

How do they get down?

Holly WT 224

In the first two readings the only exceptions concern non-story information personal to the child questioner. But Mrs G does not wholeheartedly accept the role of privileged^u possessor of information. She can read and she knows far more about the world of the story than the children around her. But she does not insist on this. In all four story readings under 40 per cent of her questions present her as the primary knower. Rather more frequent are questions that present her as of equal status with the children and imply a joint exploration of the text rather than an examination of the children's knowledge. She asks

D'you think the mouse is trying to tell Rosie something?

Teacher RW 171

implying that their views are as valid as hers.

She tends to refrain from providing evaluative feedback. Of course she only provides such feedback at all in exchanges where she presents herself as the primary knower, but even here, in all the story tellings where these occur, a proportion include no evaluative feedback. And with or without evaluation, these exchanges decline markedly between Reading 1 and Reading 4, as Table 119 shows. Yet IRF exchanges (Initiation, Response, Feedback) with the feedback taking the form of evaluation, have been found by a number of investigators to be the dominant type of classroom exchange (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, Stubbs 1983).

Table 10.19

Incidence and distribution of teacher feedback in exchanges where teacher asks a question as primary knower and receives a child response

Story	Z	X							
		A	A as %	B	B as %	C	C as %	D	D as %
		of Z		of Z		of Z		of Z	
DY	181	20	11	13	7.2	4	2.2	3	1.7
WT	110	15	13.6	11	10	1	.9	3	2.7
RW	132	6	4.5	5	3.8			1	.8
FF	138	0							
Z	total number of exchanges								
X	exchanges where teacher asks a question as primary knower and receives a response								
A	all such exchanges								
B	including evaluative feedback								
C	including non-evaluative feedback								
D	including no feedback								

From the table we can see that the 'classical' IRF exchanges never rise to more than 10 per cent of the exchanges in these story readings and are totally absent from Reading 4.

The inter-personal features of these conversational exchanges are substantially unusual in terms of what other investigators have found in school classrooms. Even with the printed text in her hands and surrounded by a mass of non-readers, Mrs G neither sets herself up consistently as the primary knower, nor arrogates to herself alone the right to nominate the next speaker. The keen sense of inter-personal

control of the four year old child is not substantially dented in this classroom. The inter-personal patterning of these exchanges provides a greater degree of continuity with their home experience than young children are normally permitted in their early years in school.

4.2.2.3

Summary of the conversational discourse structure of these story readings

Mrs G does not appear to be concerned to create a kind of classroom order that casts the children in the role of respondent, preferring to build in the classroom context something more akin to the interpersonal patterning found in the homes of young children. Although in none of these readings do the children initiate as high a percentage of the exchanges as Anna does at home, (and although of course there are some twenty of them to only one of her) the movement is in this direction. This is not to say that Mrs G has abdicated the teacher's role: she draws clear ideational boundaries around storytime, but within these she encourages the children to initiate not questions addressed to her as the possessor of privileged information, but observations and interpretations of what they are both seeing and listening to. Above all she directs them into the text, both sharing with them her own processes of making narrative sense and encouraging them to engage in a similar enterprise in ways that are more fully explored in the next section. Mrs G has determined the agenda of this discourse and ensures that distracting topics are kept in check, but in the arena of the narrative and the cognitive processes by which it is constructed, Mrs G acts not as director and arbiter but as collaborator. Thus she steers the

children towards a new ideational coherence while permitting them to hang on to the familiar inter-personal coherence.

4.2.3

The actualization of the narrative structures

As we have seen, these story readings are threaded through with conversational interaction in which Mrs G and the children talk at some length about the conventions of reading, the process of making sense of the text and about the developing narrative. But this is not the only way in which the printed text is mediated to the children. Unlike Anna's mother, Mrs G does not always restrict herself to a lively oral rendering of the words on the page, but often adapts these, extending some and paraphrasing or summarising others. And the children also make a narrative contribution.

4.2.3.1

Changes to the printed text

In her reading of Do You Want to Be My Friend Mrs G extends the question of the title and the answering "yes" the mouse finds at the end of her/his quest, to a full verbal narrative, veering between simultaneous and subsequent narration. She opens the story with words which make the narration markedly more conversational in tone than most printed narratives.

And this elephant's saying,
It's not the elephant who's
saying, it's a little mouse
right in the corner and he's
saying "Do you want to be my
friend?"

Teacher DY 19-20

The children contribute to the narration by enthusiastically taking

the part of the various creatures the mouse addresses, producing 36 shouts of "yes!" or "No!". One child, Tracey, goes beyond this to contribute a semantic extension that preserves the pattern of the story and the narrative voice of Mrs G's preceeding utterance.

Teacher Well the mouse said to the crocodile
"Do you want to be my friend?"
Tracey And he said "No!"

DY 142-143

The milkman's intrusion cuts this narration short, and although Mrs G finishes the book before speaking to him, the co-operative narration is over: the rest of the story reading is solely concerned with identifying the animals encountered by the mouse. Probably because of this interruption, so typical in the classroom, the narrative told by Mrs G lacks any explicit verbalisation of the turning point and resolution of the mouse's final encounter. The story remains unfinished. But her third person narration has been consistently focalised through the mouse with such words as

And the mouse is getting really upset

Teacher DY 429.

The changes made to Where the Wild Things Are are much less substantial, a tribute, perhaps, to Sendak's carefully pondered wording. Very often Mrs G repeats a phrase or word to pick up the narrative thread after intervening conversation. Occasionally words are changed, perhaps to relate them more closely to the children's usage. For example

his ceiling hung with vines

WT printed narrative 3

becomes

And the leaves were all around

Teacher WT 127

'an ocean' is glossed as 'a sea' and 'a forest grew' as

A wood grew with all these trees

Teacher WT 115

which edges the narration towards the indexicality of conversation. A few ellipses are expanded, and perhaps inadvertantly the clause

and called him the most wild thing of all

WT Printed narrative 4

is omitted. But this is the extent of Mrs G's alteration to the printed text.

The children's contributions to this narration take three forms. Firstly there is one semantic extension when Katrina pronounces firmly

He went in the boat

Katrina WT 134.

Other contributions come in the form of responses to Mrs G's implicit invitation to the children to join her in the narration by completing the repetitive words

a forest grew and grew and grew

WT printed narrative 3.

But the vast majority of their contributions are echoic, as the children pick up a word or phrase and repeat it savouringly. The words concerned seem chosen for their semantic power. 'Night', 'wolfsuit', 'mother', 'Max', trick 'Let the rumpus start!' and 'Stop, wild things!' are all repeated in this way with obvious delight. Occasionally the repetition distorts the original so 'wild thing' becomes 'mother thing' and 'Be still!' becomes 'Bill still'. Perhaps

because their language lacks this potency, such echoic contributions are less common in the other story readings.

Mrs G's reading of *Rosie's Walk* is a marked expansion on the printed text. She converts the subsequent narration to simultaneous, until the very last clause when she returns to the text in front of her and the past tense. Her expansion makes explicit the pictorial narrative of the hungry fox, articulating all his frustrated attempts to seize Rosie and Rosie's blithe ignorance of her danger. The satellite elements such as the frogs on the lily pad are given a kernel status as in her narration they croak a warning to Rosie. Unlike her expansion of Do You Want to Be My Friend? in this extended version of Rosie's Walk Mrs G changes the mood. Instead of the unfocalised narrative of the printed text we have a version in which events are presented partly through the fox's point of view.

And the fox thinks "Ooh good.
Now's my chance.
I'm going to,
Take a might big jump
And get hold of Rosie."

Teacher RW 124-131 (Children's utterances omitted)

She also adds to this expanded narrative a touch of intertextuality by inserting the words

Trip trap, trip trap, trip trap

Teacher RW 86

which the children know well from the sallies of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* across the bridge. They have heard this story before, and so on occasion join in Mrs G's narration, producing a duologue as Anna and her mother do in their reading of The Enormous Turnip. Tracey joins in with the trip trapping and others join in more than once with Mrs G's repeated formula

Rosie just keeps on walking.

Teacher RW 291

Twice the children respond to her invitation to complete this sentence. Again at Mrs G's implicit invitation, Simon completes another sentence appropriately with the word 'nose'. He also contributes a semantic extension at the end with the highly appropriate words in the voice of classically subsequent narration.

And then she came home.

Simon RW 326

Teacher and pupils have together created a narration rather different from the printed text, one that denies the listener the delightful sense of knowing more than the words say, but one in which the children are materially involved and which orders the complexity of the pictures in terms of the kernel events. If some of the additions move the narration towards conversation, others edge it further away.

Mrs G makes more varied changes to the text of Fish in Fish. Some involve the substitution of more familiar words such as 'in' for 'during'. Some are explanatory glosses, so that 'they argued and argued' becomes

... d'you know they had a row and
they argued and argued and argued.

Teacher FF 57

Others involve more elaborate explanatory expansion where Mrs G appears to suspect that the facts as well as the words might be unfamiliar. The sentence

One fine day, a real frog now, he climbed
out of the water and on to the grassy bank.

DY printed narrative pp7-8

is greatly elaborated as Mrs G expands the compressed formulation into an explanatory account, but one which does little to move the

narration towards conversation. Other changes are towards greater directness. Indirect speech is converted to direct, and elliptical forms are again expanded. Long descriptive passages are omitted entirely. But the most drastic change comes at the end where Mrs G abandons the delicate and evocative complexity of the 72 words that describe the fish's state on his return to water in favour of the stark formulation of Lee's contribution

He never died

Teacher FF 227.

Perhaps because of its complexity, the children make fewer contributions to this narration than to the other three. Taking the frog's part, and guided by the pictures around the text, Desmond answers the minnow's question

What exciting things have you seen?

Teacher FF 132

with the words

Lots of fishes

Desmond FF 133

There are four echoic contributions: Sonia is fascinated with the two little legs grown by the tadpole, Christine chants the word 'dry' in her usual distracted way and an unidentified child picks up the final sentence and intones

Oh fish is fish is.

Child FF 249

But at key moments of the story Michael and Lee make semantic extensions more daring than any made in previous story tellings. As Mrs G pauses in her account of the fish's longing to see the wonders he has heard about, Michael inserts the words

He jumped

Michael FF 200

Later Lee less confidently asserts

He never died, did he?

Lee FF 225

The narration that teacher and children make together is worded more simply than the printed original, and with less elaboration on the minnow's physical surroundings and state of mind. The story is thereby sharpened. Certainly the children's contributions have an aptness and potency far exceeding their apparently random shouts of 'yes' and 'no' to the reading of Do You Want to Be My Friend? in October.

4.2.3.2

Conversational contributions to the construction of the narratives

In the conversation in which all these four readings are embedded, the children are concerned to make sense of the pictures and to relate them to their own feelings, experience and knowledge. But in the first reading each picture is taken as it comes: they are less concerned with the fate of the mouse who, as Mrs G points out is "getting really upset" than with the identity of each animal he encounters. Having enjoyed the lion, Simon is constantly shouting loudly for his reappearance, oblivious to the implication of Mrs G's "We've already had a lion". The children do not appear to be looking for pattern or predictability, but are very eager to take up the semic hint of the tail, shouting their guesses out. Although Mrs G's own comments tend to focus on the mouse's state of mind, her invitations to them to speculate are all focussed on identifying the various

animals. But this she gives a distinctly hermeneutic flavour as she postpones the moment of certainty, very carefully turning the page only after she has ensured that all the children have their excited attention on her. The narrative that Mrs G and the children build together has a semic, hermeneutic and even intertextual complexity that comes as she invokes their memories of an earlier fox encountered in The Gingerbread Man. Nonetheless it lacks the completed form of the story. But if the narrative she is inviting them to construct is merely an episodic set of encounters, the part she is inviting them to play in constructing it is active, for not only are their guesses solicited, they are also encouraged to determine for themselves whether these guesses are right or wrong.

In Where the Wild Things are although at first she repudiates Serene's suggestion that the figure on the title page is a prince, later in the telling, by pointing out the significance of his regalia, she shares something of the symbolic code at work in the text. Andrew, perhaps unwittingly, adds to this as he remarks at the end that Max has taken off his mask. But much of the focus is on the proiaretic code as Mrs G intersperses this reading as she did the last with invitations to the children to "find out what happens next" and guides their interpretation of the pictures, pointing out Max's name on his boat and inviting them to share in her speculations about what the cavorting monsters are up to in the wordless drawings of pages 23 to 26. However in this story reading the conversation is principally devoted to feelings and to establishing connections between the world of the book and the children's own experience, the life to text and text to life moves that Heath and Cochran-Smith write of. The children respond readily to Mrs G's invitation to compare Max's

bedroom with their own. When she hears of Max's unblinking stare, Sonia pops in the observation that she blinks. This is taken up by Mrs G so that Max's unblinking is given a sharper and more personal significance. The only unsuccessful attempt to establish a life to text move comes when Mrs G asks where they would like to be if they wanted to be where someone loved them best of all. This question appears too complex and the children construe it as a request for information about who loves them, 'love' being construed as a romantic attachment. Much more successfully with the words "Can you imagine?" she invites the children to project themselves into the story and when Max sends the wild things off to bed, repeats the account of their dismissal with the comment "Wouldn't that be a lovely thing to do!" At the end of the story reading Mrs G goes directly to the concealed heart of the narrative as she asks the children whether they would like to send their mothers to bed without any supper and shares with them the rather wistful memory of sometimes wanting to do this when she was little.

This conversation is more wide ranging and results in a more richly textured narrative than that of the October reading. The children are also playing a more active part in the narrative construction. Christine observes spontaneously that she doesn't like big noses, Sonia exclaims in shocked tones that trees aren't allowed in houses and Holly enquires how Max and the monster got down from the trees. All this is supported by Mrs G. Although she begins by imposing her own view of Max as a little boy she confesses she doesn't know in answer to Holly's question and continually urges the children to look in the text for evidence of what happens.

The narrative teacher and children are constructing is a

psychological drama, one which calls up disturbing areas of experience, presenting family conflicts beneath a mask of fantasy and making it legitimate to voice the ultimate heresy, hatred of your mother. At the end the children are left with the thought of defiance and subsequent reconciliation with a parent in their heads, and the words of the narrative ringing in their ears.

The March reading of Rosie's Walk is different again. Like Anna they know this story, although probably not so well, and from a very different narration. Darren has chosen a favourite and the children and Mrs G engage in gleeful witness of the fox's spectacularly unsuccessful attempts to catch and eat Rosie. In this reading they already know with certainty what happens. The narrative is also at once totally removed and maximally familiar, in terms of their own experience. They have had no direct contact with foxes, hens or haycocks but attempting and evading capture are too familiar to these children to need articulation. So life to text and text to life moves have no place. Instead the focus is on enlarging and elaborating the proiaretic, enriching the sequence of kernel events, drawing in the pictorial elements of the watching mice and the frogs on the lily pad. But above all they are concerned to gloat over the juxtaposition between the fox's base intentions and the undignified situation in which they land him, and to triumph in Rosie's continual escape from the danger of which she is so blithely unaware.

As in the two previous story tellings, and as shown in Table 10.19, Mrs G makes use of what look like classic IRF exchanges. But these are not so much tests of their knowledge on which she then passes judgement, as invitations to the children to join her in construing the text. She solicits not the regurgitation of swallowed

information, but interpretation or prediction. She is concerned not with the story past but with its present or future which is, of course dependent on a sure knowledge of its past. And many of these exchanges have a pantomime quality: she invites a chorussed reply that they are readily prepared to give and which accords them a central role in the proceedings. "What does the fox want to do with her?" she asks. "Bite her, eat her. Eat her." comes back the shouted reply.

And as in other readings Mrs G asks for guidance on when to turn the page. The children respond to all these invitations eagerly. Lee speculates that the fox will splash in the water and fail to get Rosie. Simon bets the goat could eat the fox. Mrs G listens closely, responding in ways that nudge them gently back to the kernel events. At one point this narrative co-operation falters as she fails to understand Chris's question about the hen, which seems to indicate that he sees the story as one of mutual aggression rather than predator and prey. But the rest of the children's contributions are in tune with the focus on the fox's perception of what is going on that colours her narration. At the end Lea (a recent arrival to the class) wants to know where the fox goes to, which Mrs G eventually responds to, ignoring Desmond's satellite concern with a snake.

Together teacher and children have made a narrative which may lack the power and complexity of Where the Wild Things Are, but which nonetheless concerns a theme close to them all and possesses a satisfying completeness as the apparently satellite elements of the picture are drawn into the sequence of kernel events of the spoken narration.

If they are more or less at one in their readings of the first three stories, this is not quite true of the May reading of Fish is

Fish. As I have suggested in Section 4.2.1, this is a potentially complex narrative. Mrs G appears to read it as a tale of friendship, a kind of nursery version of The Good Samaritan. The text itself gives prominence to the fish's recognition of its identity and attendant limitations. Desmond reads it as a natural history textbook, but the other children appear to read it as a tale of danger and the return to safety.

These varied readings involve some relation of their own experiences to the story. Mrs G invites them to share the tadpole's surprise at the two little legs he's grown in the night and the children volunteer information about other fish and frogs they know. As the topic of the tadpole's metamorphosis is complex, almost inevitably some of these contributions go astray, becoming centrifugal rather than life to text moves. And where they are relevant, teacher and children still differ. Mrs G is concerned that they should share the feelings of fish and frog, but the children are busy making their own narratives. Instead of ploughing ahead with hers, Mrs G recognises the validity of what they are up to. She temporarily abandons her 'reading' as soon as she sees the flowers that Simon predicted. The narration stops. Other contributions are set aside as she explains to the other children how Lee (actually it was Simon) was right in his prediction that the weeds on the title page would grow into flowers. She gives full recognition to the idea that she perhaps was wrong in not endorsing this prediction at the time, and there is a pride in Simon's voice as he pronounces

Yeah they grewed. I, I'm right I am.
Simon FF 89-90

Desmond's non-narrative reading of the text is not accorded the same treatment. In her persistent failure to respond to his

initiatory moves she implicitly declares that his reading of the text is invalid. But the other children are bent on creating a narrative text, and this she regards as a legitimate enterprise, albeit one that needs to be guided and limited by the evidence on the page. Lee's suggestion that 'they' might get the abandoned minnow another fish is not rejected, but used as a frame for their interpretation of what happens on the next page. Thus a speculation is converted into an interrogation of the text. And this appears to bring him closer to an understanding of this story for later he produces the strikingly appropriate contribution at 211 "But the frog might push him back", a tentatively expressed prediction of the key event at the story's turning point - the culmination of his close and constructive attention to all that has been narrated up to now. Lee is making a complete and personal whole of what he hears, and going well beyond the information given, but in ways that can be validated by reference to the text to come. Mrs G's response does more than merely tolerate this contribution. In redefining the rest of the story reading as a process of finding out whether Lee is right, she endorses what he has said as centrally relevant. When Sonia interrupts her narration with the confident assertion that Lee was right, her topic is the act of prediction itself, and again Mrs G validates this contribution by her response.

Mrs G is not concerned to impose her reading on the children. What matters to her above all is that they should take an active part in construing the text, and should learn to seek validation of their interpretations and predictions in the text itself. Her role is to prompt and support these endeavours and the highly important nature of their contributions shows how far they have travelled since October.

Discussion and conclusions

These story readings and the other book-related activities of the classroom, are shaped not so much by tacit agreements between the participants as by rules that underlie Mrs G's actions and are increasingly accepted by the children.

1. The narration must be progressively differentiated from the conversation in which it is embedded.
2. The narration may change from one reading to the next but as it moves away from conversation, it moves closer towards becoming a carefully worked linguistic construct through which the narrative is made maximally explicit.
3. The narrative gives coherence not only to the verbal text, but also to the pictures.
4. The experiential content of narrative is superficially different from 'real life' but is internally consistent and concerned at a deeper level with emotions and predicaments that matter to young children.
5. It is legitimate to explore observations, feelings and attitudes towards events and characters in the story.
6. It is legitimate for thoughts about the story to be imbued with feelings and feelings to be intermingled with thoughts.
7. A high degree of explicitness is not necessary in conversation.
8. In order to gain satisfaction in the narrative children need to operate actively not only to construe the fictive characters and events in terms of their own experience, but also to predict what will happen and test their predictions against the evidence of the text.

9. Reading a story is a matter of creating a construct with a form that changes only slightly, but a significance that develops gradually through re-readings.

10. The conversation in which the narration is embedded is as important as the narration itself in realizing the narrative.

Like Anna's mother, Mrs G sets out to help others share something of her enjoyment of a story. Rules 5, 6, 7 and 10 are common to both situations and rules 2, 4 and 9 are very similar to agreements between Anna and her mother. But rules 1, 3 and 8 represent points of real difference.

School can never be exactly like home. Because she knows her daughter so well and because of the intimacy of the situation, Anna's mother needs little conscious effort to help Anna make a personal sense of the narratives they read together. But Mrs G knows that the forms and meanings of written narrative are comparatively strange to the twenty or so children in her charge and that she has a comparatively short time to make these familiar to these children, with their varying temperaments and experiences, of which she knows little. She has to be more deliberate. Early in the school year she starts with the conversational forms familiar to them, through which she gives them a taste of the meanings that can be created through narrative. As the year progresses and as the children gain an increasing familiarity and respect for these meanings, she introduces forms which realize these more richly.

Anna's mother can follow her daughter as she wanders from the narrative into byways of their shared experience, since she knows she can bring her quickly back and that there are no other children to consider. But Mrs G is aware that a similarly permissive attitude

might result in a number of children wandering off into disparate territories, all largely unknown to her. Narrative coherence is more easily threatened in the classroom. And so, of the children's contributions she picks up only those that relate to the central narrative, or can be shifted in that direction, and in her own contributions she tightens the narrative structure by construing the parts in the light of the whole.

She is also more overtly concerned than Anna's mother to create active enquiring readers. She sees shared enjoyment as essential, but her goal is more than this. It is independently achieved enjoyable meaning making of a kind that is involved in the reading of fiction.

Children must begin to question right from the word 'go'.
Reading isn't a hierarchy of skills, but they all interleave
and we can begin to inculcate them right from the word 'go'.
It's part of my whole philosophy.

Mrs G in conversation 8.10.80

She aims to enable the children around her to make their own sense of the texts they encounter and to assess the validity of that sense for themselves.

Her attention to the conventions of our orthographic system is part of her strategy of developing independence. Following these conventions is always presented as a means to a semantic end that is made explicit and recognised as desirable by the children themselves. It is not a matter of obedience to unexplained rules emanating from an authoritarian figure.

Unlike Anna's mother, Mrs G thinks consciously and carefully about her story times, seeing them as an essential early stage for these children, in the development of a richly conceived literacy. She sets out deliberately to help the children make connections between the familiar and the new.

One of the major aims in the first term of the nursery is to make a bridge between the child's own experience of language and the world and the contents of books and written language.

Mrs G in conversation 6.5.81.

Keeping such matters to the fore is not always easy since the prevailing conception of nursery education accords no high status either to narrative or to children's intentions, and instead steers teachers towards making opportunistic use of every event, object or observation as grist to the curricular mill, while the children, particularly those outside the mainstream culture, may have little notion let alone interest in the end product the teacher is striving to achieve. Mrs G is aware of the dangers of this conception and that she herself is not immune to them.

I think I use stories too much. It can be compulsive. Often when you're dredging up teaching points you find you lose the children.

Mrs G in conversation 7.1.81

Where her rules differ from the tacit agreements between Anna and her mother, Mrs G is acting as an experienced, reflective and informed teacher, who has considered what it is she wishes the children to learn, and how they might best achieve it in the light of their interests, experience, and ways of learning. But as she freely acknowledges, intuition also plays a part in shaping her actions. And the part it plays is not trivial. The classroom rules that duplicate tacit agreements between Anna and her mother are by and large not matters of conscious intent, but the almost inevitable consequence of a close familiarity with narrative, a recognition of its power, a generous interest in young children and a desire to share with them something of the very real but largely unexplored satisfaction that she herself has experienced in narrative. While her reading,

discussion and reflection on many years of teaching, influence Mrs G's choice of material and affect the scope and emphasis of her story readings, it is her experience as a reader and her readiness to defer to the ideas of very young children that are perhaps the most productive qualities she brings to these story readings. It is these that guide her, like Anna's mother, to help the children construct fictive worlds, set up affective and empathetic links with them and take on the new forms and meanings of narrative.

Like Anna's mother, Mrs G makes it possible for her children to engage in simultaneous, multi-level, interactive learning. Like her she acts both as a model reader and a mediator between child and author. But although intuition plays a large part in guiding her actions, so too does conscious thought and deliberation. Anna's mother sees that she is involved in sharing a pleasurable experience. Mrs G sees that she is teaching children to read. Where she differs from very many teachers of young children is in taking her intuitions into the classroom instead of abandoning them at the school door, and in seeing that these intuitions can be knitted together with ideas culled from careful study, discussion and reflection. Mrs G recognises the value of her experiences at home with her own children and, drawing on her classroom skill and educational knowledge, attempts to create an experience of a similar kind in her nursery classroom. This chapter has shown that she is substantially successful in this enterprise.

These children come from homes where the solitary reading of fiction or of other extended texts probably plays little part. Mrs G has given them an experience of 'reading' narrative fiction which is not only rooted in the familiar forms of conversation, but is also

intensely social. Together teacher and children are building a culture of shared meanings which will add depth to their future encounters with narrative.

For a number of these children, and perhaps for all, it seems that what makes it possible for them to accept these rules, or rather to make active use of them is a sense of involvement in the narrative. Early in the new year, several of the children give explicit indications of being newly aware that they can enter the narrative in a central and powerful way. A month after the first reading of Where the Wild Things Are, as Simon talks his way through the book with Andrew beside him, his eyes linger on this little pavilion in front of which Max sits glumly longing for home, and he and Andrew talk as follows:

Simon	Then he say, and he, and, then he, he likes it in there 'cos I want to go in there with him, I do.
Andrew	I can go in there where the monsters are. Monsters will love me, they will.
Simon	I want to go in there. Do you want to go in there with me? With me? Andrew?
Andrew	(Yes you and me (
Simon	(Yeah Do you Mrs Dombey?
Self	That would be nice, in there, yes wouldn't it.

Storytelling with puppets 7.1.81.

At about the same time, Holly discovers with delight that she can replace the central character of the book she is 'reading', The Little Old Man in Winter and "make it about me, make it about Holly". After 'reading' Polly Cameron's The Cat who thought he was a Tiger, as he

points to his striped jumper, Lee, a small child with a mischievous desire to appear bolder and badder than he is, tosses across the classroom the observation "I got tiger stripes too".

These children are coming to see in books meanings which run far deeper than most academic studies of young children's interactions with narrative would allow. They experience growing two little legs and inspect the hostility they feel towards their mothers, in the secure framework of narrative and in each other's company. And in so doing they help the world become a more exciting and yet more orderly place. Encouraged by Mrs G's modelling and mediation, they have come to know narrative as an arena where what is objective can be subjectified and what is subjective can be objectified, in a profoundly satisfying way.

Their experience is less extensive than Anna's, in terms of both the number of story readings they have been given and the extent to which they have made overt contributions towards these. Indeed a number of the children, like Richard, appear to have said very little during these story readings. But in contradiction to conventional wisdom about young children's learning, it would appear in Richard's case at least, the absence of overt activity does not necessarily imply an absence of involvement. Like his more extrovert classmates, Richard has, in his quiet way learned important lessons in construing and constructing narrative. Perhaps other children have modelled for him externally what he must do internally.

The question remains - how will this experience contribute to their subsequent initiation into independent reading? The answers are for these children as complex as they are for Anna, in the ways I have outlined at the end of Chapter 9. And there is the additional

complicating factor of homes where the practice of sharing books enjoyably with young children, is a more fragile and recent growth and one that may conflict with other intuitions, practices and beliefs about literacy, learning and young children. We now know that experiences fundamentally similar to those associated with success in early reading in children from book-sharing homes, can be provided in the nursery classroom for children not from such homes. Other studies must investigate the extent and nature of any relationship with success in the later stages of limitation into reading. But this study of one nursery classroom has provided a strong *prima facie* case for the productivity of the practices described, where the teacher combines the intuitions that guide such practices at home, with a thorough experience of a style of teaching that lessens the gap between home and school and an informed understanding of what, at its richest, learning to read can involve.

CONCLUSION

That pre-school experience of books of the type provided in mainstream 'Maintown' homes is a significant contributory factor to success in learning to read at school, and one whose influence extends beyond the initial stages, is now established without doubt. The study of Anna's bed-time stories reveals something of the linguistic complexity of this activity in one such family, a complexity which has the organic quality of purposeful meaning-centred activity, engaged in by participants who enjoy exploring challenging territory in each other's company. It provides clear evidence that complex learning can be achieved in the informal context of the bed-time story where the 'teacher' is guided not by formal precept ^{or} ~~and~~ an analytical approach to the task, but by intuition and a desire to share an enjoyable experience. Key features of this learning appear to be that the child's initiative and intentionality are called into play and that the books are of a kind to invite the novice in and provide her with worthwhile semantic rewards. Although in this case such learning does not appear to include the matching of spoken to printed words, it definitely includes other lessons central to the development of a powerful literacy. Thus the analysis of story-reading in this mainstream home can be seen as evidence in support of the fifth hypothesis advanced in Chapter 1, namely

Initial reading does not inevitably differ from oral language development in any fundamental sense. For certain children in certain circumstances it is possible for there to be a strongly felt need to learn to read, for the process to begin gradually, to be accompanied by little anxiety and to take place unconsciously and informally.

The study of a nursery class has shown that such experiences need not be confined to middle-class homes or nursery classes catering for children who come from such homes. Making use of both intuition and consciously acquired and formulated understandings, Mrs G succeeds in constructing a similarly productive learning situation in her classroom, one that has much of the informality of Anna's bed-time story reading and shares with it the encouragement of initiative and intentionality and the provision of narratives that are inviting and semantically rewarding.

In both mainstream home and nursery classroom, this productive form of learning draws heavily on the children's conversational competence. Narrative is embedded in the conversational forms that the children know how to use for their own purposes. Thus the children learn about the coherence of narrative through exercising their competence in the coherence of conversation. Mrs G is building home-school links far more powerful than the teachers of most young children achieve.

~~For~~
~~But~~ if Anna's is perhaps a typical mainstream home, Mrs G's is not a typical nursery classroom. The order Mrs G establishes at story-time is not achieved by the teacher giving orders which the pupils obey because of her institutional status. Instead the ideational limits set on the situation are presented in terms that the children recognise and largely comply with ^{because} ~~since~~ they know that within these limits lie satisfying rewards. Inside this ideational boundary the children are given considerable interpersonal freedom as they collaborate with the teacher to achieve these rewards.

This collaborative relationship and the intentionality of teacher and pupils are of key significance to the learning taking place,

facilitating the acquisition of forms of written language and the development of tactics central to making sense of it. So too is Mrs G's rich conception of literacy as interaction with the written word, engaged in to construct and communicate complex and important meanings, and her view of learning to read as a multi-level process in which strategies and tactics at different levels interleave. This rich sense of what reading is, combined with a recognition of the style of interaction that has proved most successful in early language development, enable Mrs G to give these children a painless initiation into making sense of the written word. Thus the hypothesis validated by Anna's experience is perhaps too cautiously worded. It is possible to create in the school classroom, circumstances in which these early lessons in literacy can take place gradually, unstressfully, unconsciously and informally.

It remains to be investigated whether the learning of the sound-symbol relationships of our alphabetic code can be achieved in a similarly collaborative and meaning-focussed manner, and whether such learning can have the tacit quality of the learning achieved by Anna and Mrs G's pupils, or whether at some point some conscious analysis of the speech stream and the graphic information on the page is for some children (or even most) necessary to learning to read independently.

Meanwhile, even from a case study of such limited scope, there are lessons to be learnt if we are to make learning to read more accessible to a greater number of children, particularly those not from mainstream homes. We need to help teachers enlarge their conceptions of what reading is, declare admissible the intuitions that spring from an enjoyment of narrative, recognise and encourage in the classroom the

kinds of interaction which young children are used to learning from, and above all, acknowledge the power of narrative to invite active enquiry and teach the child how to go about the complex business of reading.

A P P E N D I X I

Key to transcription conventions

***** indecipherable speech // Pause of 3 seconds or more
{ simultaneous speech - - - rising intonation

Home

A Anna
M Mother

School

A Desmond
B Sonia
C Jamie
D Tracey
E Holly
F Rebecca
G Christopher E
H Simon
J Janet
K Richard
L Karen
M Anthony
N Andrew
O Lee

P Alison
Q Glenda
R Sereen
S Darren
V Michael
W Kiely
X Christopher P
Y Christine
Z Katrina
AA Lea
AB Jenny
AC Julie

T Teacher
Re Researcher

U Unidentified child
UX Unidentified children

A P P E N D I X I I

Transcripts of home story readings

Rosie's Walk Pat Hutchins

Puffin, 1970

(Third of three stories that session)

- | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| | | | 1 | |
| 1 | M | C'mon 'cos I want to go | ROSIE'S WALK | |
| | | and have my supper. | By PAT HUTCHINS | |
| 2 | | Hurry up. | <i>Picture of carefree hen</i> | |
| 3 | | Rosie's Walk | <i>walking through cluttered</i> | |
| | | | <i>rural scene, followed by</i> | |
| | | | <i>watchful fox</i> | |
| | | | <i>Cover</i> | |
| 4 | | Rosie the hen went for a | <i>Picture of hen setting out</i> | |
| | | walk | <i>across picturesque farmyard</i> | |
| 5 | A | A fox is following her. | <i>with fox eyeing her greedily</i> | |
| 6 | M | Oh! | <i>from under hen-house</i> | |
| | | | 2 | |
| | | | Rosie the hen went for a walk | |
| | | | 1 - 2 | |
| 7 | | Across the yard | <i>Picture of hen walking past</i> | |
| | | | <i>fruit trees, unaware of fox</i> | |
| | | | <i>jumping after her</i> | |
| | | | <i>across the yard</i> | |
| | | | 3 - 4 | |
| 8 | | Boum ***** | <i>Picture of hen walking on</i> | |
| | | | <i>unaware while fox bumps his</i> | |
| | | | <i>nose on rake he has landed on</i> | |
| | | | 5 - 6 | |
| 9 | | Around the pond, | <i>Picture of hen walking beside</i> | |
| 10 | A | ***** fish | <i>pond, unaware of fox jumping</i> | |
| | | in the pond | <i>after her. No fish in picture.</i> | |
| | | | <i>around the pond</i> | |
| | | | 7 - 8 | |

- 11 A Splash! *Picture of hen walking on*
 12 How they, how the fox *unaware of fox landing in*
 just don't get out? *the pond. No fish in picture*
 13 M Oh I expect he'll climb *9 - 10*
 out.
 14 A Why?
 15 M Why will he climb out?
 16 A Yeah.
 17 M Well, why d'you think
 he'll climb out?
 18 A Like when he wants,
 when he, the hen to eat.
 19 M Yes he wants to eat
 Rosie.
- 20 M Over the haycock, *Picture of hen walking over*
 21 A Is, is he catching her? *haycock unaware of fox*
right behind her
over the haycock
11 - 12
- 22 M er turns page no *Picture of hen walking away*
 23 A Wh why? *from haycock unaware of fox*
 24 M (Laughter) 'cos he's a *buried in it*
 silly old fox, that's why *13 - 14*
 25 A 'cos he's gone in the
 hay.
 26 M Gone in the hay.
 27 A Could he get out?
 28 M um, Yes.
 29 Past the mill. *Picture of hen walking past*
 30 A He's doing that, doing that *mill unaware of catching her*
 31 M Is he? *foot in pulley rope, and of*
fox following her
past the mill
15 - 16

- 32 M turns page Aah! *Picture of hen walking on*
 33 She doesn't even notice *unaware of fox submerged*
 him, does she? *in flour behind her*
 17 - 18
- 34 Through the fence, *Picture of hen walking through*
 35 I think he's going to *gap in fence unaware of fox*
 get her this time. *jumping behind her*
 36 A Why? *through the fence*
- 37 M Looks like that, don't you- 19 - 20
 38 A like that
 M Know, don't you think so?
- 39 A Think he's going out.
 (excited laughter) *Picture of hen walking on*
unaware of fox landing in
farm cart behind her
 21 - 22
- 40 M Under the beehive, *Picture of hen walking on*
 41 Errr *under behives unaware of*
 A (laughter) *fox in runaway cart tumbling*
beehives behind her
under the beehives
 23 - 24
- 42 A She's even away *Picture of hen walking on,*
unaware of tumbled beehives
behind her, and fox
running away pursued by bees
 25 - 26
- 43 M And got back in time *Picture of hen entering*
 for dinner. *hen-house*
- 44 A D'you know the fox *and got back in time for*
 can't get Rosie hen in *dinner*
 in in her cage. 27
- 45 M No.

46 No that's why hens sleep
 in them
47 M They're called hen coops
48 And, and that's why hens
 sleep in them, so that foxes
 can't get them.
49 So they're nice and safe.
50 Bye-bye Rosie!
51 Mummy's suppertime now.

Where the Wild Things Are Maurice Sendak Puffin, 1970

(First of three stories that session)

- 1 A Mummy 1
WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE
- 2 M Yes *Picture of drowsing monster*
- 3 A Can you read the stories *sitting in fantastic scenery with*
now? *sailing boat on water in back-*
- 4 M All right, I'll read the *ground*
stories now. STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE
SENDAK
- 5 Where the Wild Things Are. *Cover*
- 6 A Got to, got to take my
***** off.
- 7 Got to take my '*****'
- 8 M Can't you take that off
after you've had the story?
- 9 A No.
- 10 Can't 2
- 11 M The night Max wore his The night Max wore his
wolf suit. wolf suit and made
- 12 And made mischief, of mischief of one kind
one kind. *Picture of boy in wolf*
suit hammering nail in wall-
papered wall
1 - 2
- 13 And another and another
Picture of boy in wolf suit
brandishing fork and chasing
dog
3 - 4
- 14 His mother called him his mother called him
"Wild thing!" "WILD THING!"
- 15 And Max said "I'll eat and Max said "I'LL EAT YOU UP!"
you up!"
- 16 So he was sent to bed, so he was sent to bed without
- 17 Without eating anything. eating anything.
- 18 A ***** *Picture of boy in wolf suit in*
bedroom looking crossly at
closed door
5 - 6

- 3
- 19 M That very night, in That very night in Max's
Max's room, a forest grew. room a forest grew
- 20 A Uh! *Picture of boy in wolf suit
sulking, unaware of trees
growing behind him, all
around the bedroom*
7 - 8
- 21 M And grew. and grew -
*Picture of boy smiling and
dancing in thicker and more
exotic tree growth with grassy
floor, but bedroom walls,
window and door still visible*
9 - 10
- 22 And grew and grew until his ceiling
- 23 And grew hung with vines
- 24 until his ceiling hung - and the walls became the
- 25 A Euh, - world all around
- M with vines and the walls - *Picture of boy dancing in*
- A euh, euh, euh, *forest, with even more exotic*
- M became the world all *trees and plants and no sign*
around. *of bedroom*
- 26 A Uh, uh uh uh 11 - 12
- 27 Euh, uhu uhu uhu
- 28 M And and an ocean tumbled by
an ocean tumbled by, with with a private boat for Max
a private boat for Max. and he sailed off through
- 29 A Uhu, uhu night and day
- 30 M And he sailed off. *Picture of smiling boy sailing*
- 31 A Uhu *away in boat labelled 'Max'*
- 32 M Through night and day. 13 - 14
- 33 A Euh

- 34 M And in and out of weeks. and in and out of weeks
 35 And almost over a year. and almost over a year
 36 To where the wild things are. to where the wild things are.
*Picture of alarmed boy in
 boat by land, with horned
 monster rearing out of sea
 in front of him*
 15 - 16
- 37 And when he came to the And when he came to the
 place where the wild place where the wild things are
 things are, they roared they roared their terrible roars
 their terrible roars and and gnashed their terrible teeth
 gnashed their terrible and rolled their terrible eyes
 teeth and rolled their and showed their terrible claws
 terrible eyes and showed *Picture of cross boy in boat*
 their terrible claws. *looking at monsters roaring,*
gnashing and rolling their eyes
at him
 17 - 18
- 38 Till Max said "Be still!" till Max said "BE STILL!"
 39 And tamed them with the and tamed them with the
 magic trick of staring magic trick
 into all their yellow of staring into all their yellow
 eyes without blinking once. eyes without blinking once
 40 And they were frightened and they were frightened and
 and called him the most called him the most wild thing
 wild thing of all. of all
*Picture of confident boy, arms
 outstretched, looking into eyes
 of disconcerted, collapsing
 monsters*
 19 - 20

41 And made him king of all wild things. and made him king of all wild things.

42 "And now," cried Max "Let the wild rumpus start!" ⁵"And now," cried Max "Let the wild rumpus start!"
Picture of boy with crown and sceptre accepting homage from monsters
21 - 22

43 A What are they doing? *Picture of boy and monsters*

44 M Aaa aa aaah! *shouting and dancing with abandon*

45 Jumping up and down. *to a full moon*

46 A ***** 23 - 24

47 M Aaaaaaaah!

48 See he's jumping in the air.

49 He's jumping into the tree, that one, isn't he?

50 Now there's some in the trees *Picture of smiling boy and grinning monsters swinging from branches*

51 Like you liked some, that one last time. 25 - 26

52 Which one d'you like?
turns page

53 A Which one d'you like? *Picture of boy wearing crown*

54 M I like that one. *and proudly wielding sceptre,*

55 A I like that one. *riding on one of a troop of*

M (Laughter) *grinning dancing monsters*

56 A He's got square teeth and those've got square teeth. 27 - 28

57 M Yes, they've both got square teeth.

58 A But mine's different.

59 M Yes yours different.

60 Yours has got a, a different sort of nose, hasn't it?

61 A Um.

62 M "Now stop" Max said. 16 "Now stop!" Max said and sent
 63 And sent the wild things the wild things off to bed 7
 off to bed without their without their supper. And
 supper. Max the King of all wild things
 64 And Max, the king of all was lonely and wanted to be where
 wild things was lonely. someone loved him best of all.
 65 And wanted to be where 8 Then all around from far away
 someone loved him best across the world
 of all. he smelled good things to eat
 66 Then all around, from far so he gave up being king of
 away across the world, he where the wild things are.
 smelled good things to eat. *Picture of sad boy sitting with*
 67 So he gave up being king of *head on hand in striped tent,*
 where the wild things are. *surrounded by tired and*
contented monsters
 29 - 30

68 But the wild things cried 9 But the wild things cried,
 "Oh please don't go, we'll "Oh please don't go -
 eat you up we love you so". we'll eat you up - we love you so!"
 69 And Max, said "No". 10 And Max said, "No!"
 70 The wild things roared 11 The wild things roared their
 their terrible roars. terrible roars and gnashed their
 71 And showed their terrible terrible teeth and rolled their
 claws. terrible eyes and showed their
 72 But Max, stepped into his terrible claws but Max stepped
 private boat and waved into his private boat and waved
 goodbye. goodbye.
Picture of boy smiling and waving
as he sails away while monsters roar,
gnash and roll their eyes at him
 31 - 32

- 73 M And sailed back, over a year, and in and out of weeks and through a day - and sailed back over a year and in and out of weeks and through a day
Picture of boy looking down imperiously from bow of sailing boat at choppy waves with full moon in background
33 - 34
- and into the night of his very own room. and into the night of his very own room
- 74 Where he found his supper waiting for him. Where he found his supper waiting for him
Picture of boy scratching his head in bedroom he left, with full moon visible through window
35 - 36
- 75 And it was still hot and it was still hot
- 76 A ***** 37
- 77 M Which one would you like now?

The Enormous Turnip Vera Southgate Ladybird

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|---|
| 1 | M | The Enormous Turnip | WELL - LOVED |
| 2 | A | It's not as huge as that | 1 TALES |
| 3 | M | It is huger than that | THE ENORMOUS TURNIP |
| 4 | | It's huger than huger
than huger. | <i>Picture of old man, old woman,
boy, girl, dog and cat
heaving at enormous turnip
cover</i> |
| 5 | A | It's not huge as this. | |
| 6 | M | No, it's not huger than
that, no. | |
| 7 | A | Thought it wasn't. | |
| 8 | M | Once upon a time, in the
spring, an old man sowed
some rows of turnip
seeds in his garden. | 2
Once upon a time,
in the Spring
an old man
sowed some rows of turnip seeds
in his garden.
<i>Picture of old man bending
over ground with spade by
his side</i>
4 - 5 |
| 9 | M | As time went by the
rain fell on the seeds and
the sun shone down on them
and the turnips began
to grow. | 3
As time went by,
the rain fell on the seeds
and the sun shone down on them
and the turnips
began to grow.
<i>Picture of old man bending
over growing turnips with
rustic house in background</i>
6 - 7 |
| 10 | | Every day the turnips
grew a little bigger | 4
Every day
the turnips grew
a little bigger.
<i>Picture of exotic bird
watching vast turnip plants</i> |

- 11 M One of them grew much faster than all the others.
- 12 It grew large, then very large { then huge { until at last then very large,
13 A { then 'normous } then huge,
14 A { it was until at last it was *enormous!*
M it was { enormous *Picture of old man gazing*
15 A { enormous *amused at vast turnip*
16 M No-one had ever seen such *plant*
an enormous turnip.
- 17 A That far
- 18 M One day the old man fancied a plateful of turnips for his dinner.
- 19 He took off his jacket and put on his big boots.
- 20 And went out into his garden.
- 21 He gathered up the leaves of the enormous turnip with two hands in the proper way.
- 22 And he pulled.
- 23 And he pulled and pulled with all his might.
- 24 But he could not pull up the enormous turnip.
- 5 But one of them grew much faster than all the others
8 - 9
- 6 It grew large,
7 No-one had ever seen such an enormous turnip
10 - 11
- 8 One day,
the old man fancied a plateful of turnip for his dinner.
9 He took off his jacket,
put on his big boots and went out into his garden.
Picture of old man putting on boots by watching dog
12 - 13
- 10 He gathered up the leaves of the enormous turnip in his two hands, in the proper way,
and he pulled.
Picture of old man trying to pull up turnip watched by exotic bird
11 He pulled and pulled with all his might but he could *not* pull up the enormous turnip.
14 - 15

- 25 M So the old man called to his
 { wife to come and help him.
 26 A { does he need a wife,
 pussycat, dog ***** ,
 and what's the last one,
 girl and boy?
- 27 M Yes, that's right *****
 28 A Where they are?
 29 M So the old man called to
 his wife to come and help
 him to pull up the enormous
 turnip.
- 30 The old woman put her
 arms around her husband's
 waist.
- 31 Then the old man pulled
 and the old woman pulled
 32 They pulled and pulled
 with all their might
 but they could not pull it
 up at all.
- 33 Difficult to do.
- 34 So the old woman called
 to a little boy to come
 and help pull up the
 enormous turnip.
- 35 The little boy took hold
 of the old woman's legs.
- 12
 So the old man called
 to his wife
 to come and help pull up
 the enormous turnip.
*Picture of old man beckoning
 to old woman across
 chicken-strewn farmyard*
- 13
 The old woman put her arms
 around her husband's waist.
 16 - 17
- 14
 Then the old man pulled
 and the old woman pulled.
*Picture of old man and
 woman heaving at turnip with
 decorative fence and trees in
 background*
- 15
 The pulled and pulled
 with all their might
 but they could not pull up
 the enormous turnip.
 18 - 19
- 16
 So the old woman called
 to a little boy
 to come and help pull up
 the enormous turnip.
*Picture of woman talking to
 boy and pointing to turnip
 while man stands by puzzled*
- 17
 The little boy took hold
 of the woman's waist
 20 - 21

36 M Then the old man pulled
and the old woman pulled
and the little boy pulled.
37 They pulled and pulled
with all their might.
38 But they could not pull
up the enormous turnip.

18
Then the old man pulled
and the old woman pulled
and the little boy pulled.
*Picture of old man, woman
and boy heaving at
turnip*
19
They pulled and pulled
with all their might
but they could *not* pull up
the enormous turnip.

22 - 23

39 So the little boy called to
a little girl to come
and help him pull up
the enormous turnip.
40 The little girl took hold
of the little boy's jersey.

20
So the little boy called
to a little girl
to come and help to pull up
the enormous turnip.
*Picture of boy waving to
girl across farmyard while
old man and woman stand
puzzled*

21
The little girl took hold
of the little boy's jersey.

24 - 25

41 Then the old man pulled
and the old woman pulled
and the little boy pulled
and the little girl pulled.
42 They pulled and pulled
with all their might.
43 But they could not pull
up the enormous turnip.

22
Then the old man pulled
and the old woman pulled
and the little boy pulled
and the little girl pulled.
*Picture of old man, woman,
boy and girl heaving at
turnip*

23
They pulled and pulled
with all their might
but they could not pull up
the enormous turnip.

26 - 27

44	M	So the little girl {	called	24	So the little girl called
45	A	{	I can		to a big dog
			pull up my turnip with		to come and help to pull up
			my foot		the enormous turnip.
46	M		Can you?	25	The big dog took hold
47	A	(heavy breathing sounds)	*****		of the little girl's belt.
48	M	{	So the little girl called to-		<i>Picture of little girl</i>
49	A	{	*****		<i>crouching and making anxious</i>
	M		her, big dog to come and		<i>gestures at dog while others</i>
			help pull up the enormous		<i>stand puzzled</i>
			turnip.		28 - 29
50			The big dog took hold of		
			the little girl's skirt.		
51			Then the old man pulled	26	Then the old man pulled
			and the old woman pulled		and the old woman pulled
			and the little boy pulled		and the little boy pulled
			and the little girl pulled		and the little girl pulled
			and the big dog pulled.		and the big dog pulled.
52			They pulled and pulled		<i>Picture of old man, woman,</i>
			with all their might.		<i>boy, girl and dog heaving</i>
53			But they could not pull		<i>at turnip</i>
			up the enormous turnip.	27	They pulled and pulled
					with all their might
					but they could <i>not</i> pull up
					the enormous turnip.
					30 - 31
54			So the big dog called	28	So the big dog called
			to a black cat to come and		to a black cat
			help him pull up the		to come and help to pull up
			enormous turnip.		the enormous turnip.
55			The black cat took hold		<i>Picture of dog leaning down</i>
			of the big dog's tail.		<i>with open mouth looking</i>
					<i>at cat across threshold of house</i>
				29	The black cat took hold
					of the big dog's tail.

56 M And the old man pulled
and the old woman pulled
and the little { boy pulled-
57 A { boy pulled
M and the little girl { pulled
58 A { girl
pulled.
59 M { And big dog pulled and the-
60 A { And big dog pulled and the-
M { black cat pulled and pulled-
A { black cat pulled and pulled-
M { and pulled with all their-
A { and pulled with all their-
M { might but they could not-
A { might but they
M { pulled up the enormous turnip
61 A { pull up the enormous
62 nip.
63 M The black cat called
{ to a teeny wee mouse to-
64 A { to a teeny wee mouse
M come and help to { pull up-
65 A { where's it?
M the enormous turnip.
66 A I want it.
67 M The tiny mouse took hold
of the black cat's tail.

68 M Then the old man pulled
69 A pulled
70 M { And the old woman-
71 A { And the
M { pulled and the-
72 A { pulled
M { little boy pulled and the-
73 A { little boy pulled and the-
M { little girl pulled and the-
A { little girl pulled and the-
M { big dog pulled and the-
A { black dog pulled and the-

569

30

Then the old man pulled
and the old woman pulled
and the little boy pulled
and the little girl pulled
and the big dog pulled
and the black cat pulled.

They pulled and pulled
with all their might
but they could *not* pull up
the enormous turnip.
*Picture of old man, woman,
boy, girl, dog and cat
heaving at turnip*

34 - 35

32

The black cat called
to a tiny mouse
to come and help to pull up
the enormous turnip.

³³
The tiny mouse took hold
of the black cat's tail.

*Picture of cat looking intently
at mouse by red berries*

36 - 37

34

Then the old man pulled
and the old woman pulled
and the little boy pulled
and the little girl pulled
and the big dog pulled
and the black cat pulled
and the tiny mouse pulled.

*Picture of old man, woman,
boy, girl, dog, cat and
mouse heaving at turnip.*

They pulled and pulled
with all their might

38 - 39

73	M	{	black cat pulled and the-	
	A	{	black cat pulled and the-	
	M	{	tiny wee mouse pulled.	
	A	{	tiny wee mouse pulled.	
74	M	{	They pulled and pulled;	
75	A	{	They pulled and pulled;	
	M	{	with all their might and-	
	A	{	with all their might and-	36
	M	{	this time they did pull-	And this time
	A	{	this time they did pull-	they did pull up
	M	{	up the enormous turnip.	the enormous turnip!
	A	{	up the enormous turnip.	<i>Picture of everybody</i>
76	M		It came up with such a	<i>fallen to the ground with</i>
			jerk that they all fell {down,-	<i>old man clutching at</i>
77	A		{down	<i>released turnip</i>
	M		flat on their backs.	³⁷ It came up with such a jerk
				that they all fell down
				flat on their backs.
				40 - 41
78	A	{	But {the enormous turnip-	38
79	M	{	the enormous turnip	The enormous turnip fell
	A	{	fell on top of {the old-	³⁹ The old man fell
80	M	{	the old	on top of the old woman.
81	A	{	w{om, man.	⁴⁰ The old woman fell
	M	{	man,	on top of the little boy.
82	A	{	The old man fell on-	⁴¹ The little boy fell
83	M	{	The old man	on top of the little girl.
	A	{	top of the old woman,	⁴² The little girl fell
84	M	{	top of the old woman.	on top of the big dog.
85	A	{	The old woman fell on top-	⁴³ The big dog fell
86	M	{	The old woman fell on top-	on top of the black cat.
	A	{	of the little boy.	⁴⁴ The black cat fell
	M	{	of the little boy.	on top of the tiny mouse.
87		{	The little {boy fell on top-	<i>Picture, from above, of</i>
88	A	{	boy fell on top-	<i>everybody on ground with</i>
	M	{	of the little girl.	<i>exotic birds flying one on either side</i>
	A	{	of the little girl.	42 - 43

89 M {The little girl fell on top of-
 90 A {The little girl fell on
 M {the big dog
 91 A {top of the *****,
 92 M {The big dog fell on top of-
 93 A {The big dog fell on top of-
 M {the black cat.
 A {the
 94 And the black cat {fell on top-
 95 M {fell on top-
 {of the tiny mouse
 {of the tiny mouse.

96 After a moment they all
 jumped up, shook {themselves
 97 A {shook
 M and started to laugh.
 98 They laughed and laughed
 for a {long long time.
 99 A {shook the man's
 ***** little mouse?
 100 M Yes and the little mouse
 is laughing too.

45
 After a moment
 they all jumped up,
 shook themselves
 and started to laugh.
*Picture of animated
 humans and puzzled
 animals*
 46
 They laughed and laughed
 for a long, long time
 44 - 45

101 Then they carried in
 {the turnip.
 102 A {look, look the mouse-
 isn't shook.
 103 M They carried in the turnip
 into the old woman's kitchen
 104 The old woman cut up
 the turnip and cooked it
 for dinner.

47
 Then they carried
 the enormous turnip
 into the old woman's kitchen.
 48
 The old woman
 cut up the turnip
 and cooked it for dinner.
*Picture of old man and boy
 carrying turnip into kitchen,
 watched by woman and
 dancing girl and dog*
 46 - 47

		49
105	M	Then the old man and the
		old {woman and the little
106	A	{woman and the little boy
107	M	and <u>the</u> ,
108	A	and the little girl
109	M	and the
110	A	No, I'll do it.
111		And the big dog and the
		black cat and the tiny
		wee mouse {all had turnip-
112	M	{all
	A	for dinner.
	M	(laughs)
		48 - 49
		50
113		They all ate and ate
		until they were full.
114		But they couldn't eat up
		all the enormous turnip.
115		There was plenty of it
		left for dinner the next
		day.
116		And the day after.
117		And that was the end
		{of the
118	A	{of the normous turnip.
119		Enormous.
120	M	Good *****
121		Ow!
122		Right.
123		Bed-time!
		50 - 51

The Little Red Hen Vera Southgate
(Third of four stories that session)

Ladybird 1966

- | | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | A | Little Red Hen now | 'WELL-LOVED TALES' |
| 2 | M | Little Red Hen first. | The Little Red Hen |
| 3 | A | She ***** Little Red | and the grains of wheat |
| 4 | M | Right. | <i>Picture of hen carrying</i> |
| 5 | | Little Red Hen | <i>bread down village street</i> |
| | | | A LADYBIRD |
| | | | EASY-READING |
| | | | BOOK |
| | | | <i>Cover</i> |
| 6 | | Once upon a time there was | 1 |
| | | a little red hen who lived | THE LITTLE RED HEN |
| | | in a farmyard. | and the grains of wheat |
| | | | 2 |
| | | | Once upon a time there was |
| | | | a little red hen who lived |
| | | | in a farmyard. |
| | | | <i>Picture of hen standing on</i> |
| | | | <i>farmyard wall</i> |
| | | | 4 - 5 |
| 7 | | One day Little Red Hen | 3 |
| | | found some grains of | One day the little red |
| | | wheat. | hen found some grains |
| | | | of wheat |
| 8 | | She took them to the other | 4 |
| | | animals in the farmyard | She took them to the other |
| | | | animals in the farmyard |
| | | | <i>Picture of hen bending over</i> |
| | | | <i>grains of wheat</i> |
| | | | 6 - 7 |

9	M	"Who will help me to plant these grains of wheat?"	5 "Who will help me to plant these grains of wheat?" asked the little red hen.
		{asked Little Red Hen	
10	A	{uh, this doesnt come off!	
11	M	No it's not chocolate money, that's alright.	<i>Picture of hen, cat, rat and pig.</i>
12	A	Why's money?	8 - 9
13	M	It's proper coins.	
14		It's not chocolate money.	
15		"Who will help me to plant these grains of wheat?" asked the little red hen.	6 "Not I," said the cat.
16		"Not I" said the cat	7 "Not I," said the rat.
17		"Not I" said the rat.	8 "Not I," said the pig.
18		"Not I" said the pig.	
			<i>Picture of hen watching cat, rat and pig walk away</i>
			10 - 11
19		"Then I shall plant the grains of wheat myself" said the little red hen.	9 Then I shall plant the grains myself," said the little red hen.
20		And she did.	10 So she did.
			<i>Picture of hen planting grains.</i>
			12 - 13
21	M	Every day Little Red Hen went to the fields to watch the grains of wheat growing, big and tall and strong.	11 Every day the little red hen went to the field to watch the grains of wheat growing. They grew tall and strong.

Picture of hen standing by growing wheat.
14 - 15

22 M One day the little red hen
saw that the wheat was
ready to be cut.

23 So she went to the other
animals in the farmyard.

13

One day, the little red hen
saw that the wheat was
ready to be cut.

14

So she went to ther other
animals in the farmyard

*Picture of hen standing by
fully grown wheat.*

16 - 17

24 "Who will help me to cut
the wheat?" asked the
little { red hen.

25 A { Why did they have
some, lots, lots of
chocolate money?

15

"Who will help me to cut
the wheat?" asked the
little red hen.

*Picture of hen facing pig
with rat and cat*

26 M At Christmas time.

27 A Uh, when it's my Nanny's
Christmas when I going to
have some more lots of
chocolate money.

18 - 19

28 M Yes.

29 "Not I" said the cat, "Not
I" said the rat, "Not I"
said the pig.

16

"Not I," said the cat.

17

"Not I," said the rat.

18

"Not I," said the pig.

*Picture of hen watching cat,
rat and pig walk away*

20 - 21

- 19
 30 M "Then I shall cut the wheat myself" said the little red hen. "Then I shall cut the wheat myself," said the little red hen.
- 31 A But she shouldnt 'cos there's, ²⁰so she did.
 'cos there's, 'cos why does everyone not helping her?
- 32 M Because they're lazy.
 A (laughter) *Picture of hen cutting wheat with knife*
 M (laughter)
- 33 A But but, why they lazy? 22 - 23
- 34 M Well, they're naughty aren't they.
- 35 A Why they naughty?
- 21
 36 M The wheat was now ready to be made into flour, so the little red hen said to herself as she set off to the farmyard. "The wheat is now ready to be made into flour," said the little red hen to herself, as she set off for the farmyard.
Picture of hen carrying wheat along path
 24 - 25
- 22
 37 Who'll help me to take the wheat to the mill to be ground into flour?" asked the little red hen. Who will help me to take the wheat to the mill, to be ground into flour?" asked the little red hen.
Picture of hen carrying wheat with cat, rat and pig
 26 - 27
- 23
 38 "Not I" said the cat, "Not I" said the rat, "Not I" said the pig. "Not I," said the cat.
²⁴"Not I," said the rat,
²⁵"Not I," said the pig.
- 39 A This doesn't come off.
Picture of hen watching cat, rat and pig walk away
 28 - 29

- 40 M "Then I shall take the wheat to the mill myself" said the little red hen.
- 41 She did.
- 26
"Then I shall take the wheat to the mill myself," said the little red hen.
²⁷ So she did.
Picture of hen carrying wheat by windmill
30 - 31
- 42 The little red hen took the wheat to the mill and the miller ground it into flour.
- 43 A Whu whu why you got a hole in there?
- 44 M Well, in a mill they're upstairs and it's like going into an attic, you need to climb up.
- 45 You know when we go in the attic and you climb up and up the ladder and go through a hole.
- 46 It's like that in a mill.
- 28
The little red hen took the wheat to the mill and the miller ground it into flour.
Picture of hen carrying wheat in mill, approaching miller in mill by hole in floor
32 - 33
- 47 When the wheat had been ground into flour, the little red hen took it to the other animals in the farmyard.
- 29
When the wheat had been ground into flour, the little red hen took it to the other animals in the farmyard.
Picture of hen carrying bag of flour away from mill
34 - 35

48 M "Who'll help me to take
this flour to the baker's
to be made into bread?"
asked the little red hen.

30

"Who will help me to take this
flour to the baker, to be made
into bread?" asked the little
red hen.

*Picture of hen approaching cat,
rat and pig in barn*

36 - 37

49 "Not I" said the
50 A I'll tell you where there's
thing there.

31

"Not I," said the cat.

³²
"Not I," said the rat.

³³
"Not I," said the pig.

51 M Where's it gone?

52 A There's it *****

53 "I will" said the fox

54 M Cat

55 A Cat, cat

56 Where are we now?

57 M We're here.

58 "Not I" said the cat.

59 "Not I" said the {rat

60 A {rat

61 M "Not I" said the

62 A Cat, pig and baby pig.

63 M The baby pig.

34

64 "Then I shall take the flour to the baker myself" said
the little red hen.

"Then I shall take the flour
to the baker myself," said
the little red hen.

65 So she did.

35

So she did.

*Picture of hen approaching
baker with bag of flour*

40 - 41

66 The little red hen took
the flour to the baker
and the baker made it
into bread.

36

The little red hen took the
flour to the baker and the
baker made it into bread.

*Picture of hen watching baker
put loaf into oven*

42 - 43

67 M When the bread was baked
the little red hen took
it to the other animals
in the farmyard.

37
When the bread was baked,
the little red hen took it to
the other animals in the
farmyard.

*Picture of hen carrying loaf
in string bag*

44 - 45

68 "The bread is now ready
to be eaten" said the
little red hen.

38
"The bread is now ready to
be eaten," said the little
red hen.

69 "Who will help me to
eat the bread?"

39
"Who will help me to eat
the bread?"

70 A Aah!

*Picture of hen carrying bread
into farmyard, watched by
cat, rat and pig*

71 M Aah!

46 - 47

72 "I will" said the cat.

40
"I will," said the cat.

73 "I will" said the rat.

41
"I will," said the rat.

74 "I will" said the pig.

42
"I will," said the pig.

*Picture of cat, rat and pig
approaching hen eagerly*

48 - 49

75 M What did the little red
hen say?

43
"No, you will not," said the
little red hen.

76 A "No, no, no, no you will
not!"

44
I shall eat it myself."

M (laughter)

45
So she did.

77 M "No, I shall eat it
myself."

78 A Yes

79 M So she did!

80 A Why she ate it herself?

*Picture of hen wielding knife
by loaf, in front of bemused
cat, rat and pig*

81 M Well, 'cos they hadn't
helped her to make it, had
they.

50 - 51

82 Which one d'you want now?

A P P E N D I X I I I

Transcripts of children's story 'readings' with puppets

Story tellings by Sonia (B) D.O.B. 12.11.76

9.10.80 Tape 2 Side 1 (6-45)

The Little Old Man who Couldn't Read (with Holly (E))

1 Re Can Charlie tell Bill?
2 Cos I don't think Bill knows about it.//
3 Now then, what happens here?
4 Can you remember what it's about?
5 B About the man.
6 Re That's right
7 Did Bill hear that?
8 B {Yeah
9 Re {About the little old man, that's right.
 Was he a special little old man?
11 B Yeah
12 Re What was special?//
13 Now//
14 Can you turn the pages over for Charlie?
15 Right
16 And you help Charlie say the story?
17 O.K?//
18 You have to say the story, otherwise Bill won't hear.
19 B And they're doing the toys.
20 Re And they're doing the toys, that's right.
21 Did you hear that Bill, they're doing the toys.
22 E What they doing now?
23 Re Let's see whether Charlie knows what they're doing.
24 Let him have a good look.
25 See whether Charlie can remember what they're doing.//
26 Are they still doing the toys?
27 B Going to the ***** she's kissing him.
28 Re Yes she's kissing him isn't she.
29 What d'you think she's going to do?
30 B Going home.
31 They're going shopping.
32 Re He's going shopping.

Sonia 9.10.80

33 B Going to the shop.
34 Find soup.//
(B silently jabs finger at picture)
35 Re He's buying things in the shop, isn't he?
36 B Buying soup.
37 Re He's buying soup.
38 And what's he doing now?
39 B Don't like that soup.
40 All the stuff
41 That's it.

The Tiger who came to Tea (with Janet (J))

1 Re And Sonia's going to help him tell the story of the tiger
 who came to tea?
2 O.K.
3 J Then it all *****
4 Re Then what?
5 J Look
6 Re Mmm.
7 Now then, can you tell us what's happening here, Sonia?
8 B Lion's not going nowhere.
9 Re He's not going nowhere?
10 J What is it?
11 He's going to,
12 Re Can we wait till it's your turn Janet, OK?
13 Sonia's going to help Charlie tell that story now.
14 B Lion can't come in.
15 Re The tiger can't come in?
16 Just wait a minute.
17 We'll do that later OK?
18 B And he c, tiger done it, ate it up.
19 And drank all the tea up.
20 J Teapot.
21 Teapot.
22 Hmm.
23 B And pulled the,
24 Tiger going to eat something else *****
25 And tiger drank all the water
26 And t, and dried tiger.
27 And tiger a bath.
28 I know what that is.
29 Down there.
30 They're in the dark.
31 They don't want to get some the tiger something.
32 And there's something by.

Naughty Kevin (with Tracey (D))

			<u>Printed text</u>
1	Re	Right, now then.	Naughty Kevin
2	B	This is Kevin the kitten	This is Kevin the kitten.
3	D	It's not coming out.	
4	Re	Sh sh	
5	B	He was having his breakfast	Kevin was having some porridge.
6		His Mummy went upstairs	His Mum went upstairs.
7	D	It's not coming out.	
8	Re	Sh, it's not supposed to come out now, quiet.	
9	B	And he was getting a comic.	Kevin got a comic.
10		And he was looking at his comic.	He looked at the comic.
11		And he was getting all that down his clothes.	He spilt some of the porridge.
12		And he was, and he was falling on the chair.	He spilt all the porridge.
13		And, and he Mum said "Oh look at him!"	His Mum said, "What a mess."
14		And he had to get changed for school.	She had to change his clothes.

Story tellings by Holly (E) D.O.B. 2.1.77

9.10.80 Tape 2 Side 1 (68-148)

Do You Want to be my Friend? (with Sonia (B))

1 Re Now, Charlie, what's happening?
2 E Did the mouse want to be his friend.
3 Re The mouse, what did you say?
4 E Did the mouse want to be his friend.
5 Re Did the mouse want to be his friend.
6 E Mmm
7 Re Uhum
8 Yes
9 E Horse
10 Mine, horse
11 Re Yes
12 Can Bill see the horse?
13 E I got a cat at home
14 Re Have you?
15 E I want that horse
16 Re You want the horse?
17 E Mmm
18 B And I do.
19 Re Oh dear, horses eat a lot more than cats do, don't they?
20 E Yeah.
21 Re And you can have a cat in your house but you can't
 really have a horse in your house, {can you,
22 B (No only outside in
 the garden.
23 Re Only outside in the garden.
24 E I want a horse
25 Re There's a horse
26 E Did the mouse want to be his friend?
27 Re Did the mouse want to be his friend?
28 E Mmm

Holly 9.10.80

29 B What's that?
30 Re That's a mouse isn't it.
31 B { I I,
32 Re { What d'you think Charlie thinks it is?
33 E "I think it's a snake" he says.
34 Re Oh he says he thinks it's a snake.
35 E Mmm
36 B It is a snake.
37 Re Yeah.
38 Can you help Charlie turn the pages over?
39 Because Charlie's hands are not very good at turning the pages
over.
40 And now then, what's happening here?
41 E A crocodile
42 B A crocodile
43 Re Mmm.
44 E "Did he say he wants to be his friend?" The crocodile said.
45 Re Uhum
46 E Look at that tail of the lion.
47 That's the thing under the lion.
48 B I got *****
49 Re Right, the tail belongs to the lion, I think.
50 E It's under the lion.
51 Re We'll see, we'll see.
52 Re Now then
53 What's happening there?
54 Can Charlie tell us what's happening there?
55 Can you have a good look Charlie?
56 E { A noceros, a noceros
57 Re It's a rhinoceros, yes.
58 And what's happening?
59 E He said he wants to be his friend.
60 Re Uhum.
61 E And, he said "Yes"
62 Re He said "Yes" did he?
63 E Mmm

64 Re I see
65 E What's that?
66 Re We'll have to see
67 E Peacock
68 Re That's right
69 Let Holly turn the page
70 That's right, very good.
71 And give Charlie { a good look
72 E { That's a sea lion
73 B Sea lion
74 Re That's a sea lion isn't it Charlie.
75 Is Bill listening to what Charlie's telling him?
76 That's a sea lion.
77 E I better turn it properly.
78 Re That's right, turn over
79 I think you may find it easier if we just have Charlie
sitting here, don't you, Holly?
80 Otherwise your hands will find it hard to turn the pages.
81 B I took mine away
82 Re Now then.
83 E Snuggling
84 Re I wonder
85 E What's { this then?
86 B { those ones
87 B Those
88 Re I wonder.
E *****
89 Re And what happened here?
90 Can Charlie tell us?
91 E That's a bird
92 Re Uhum
93 B Think so
94 Re Uhum
95 B Fox
96 Re Careful with the pages

97 See if you can do it just by the corner
98 E Mummy's calling
99 Re I don't think Mummy is calling you sweetheart
100 I promised you'd be downstairs for hometime.
101 B Fox
102 E After it, then feathers
103 B That a fox
104 E Fox
105 B Whose is that tail?
106 E I know what it is
107 It's to be a Kanga
108 B That a fox
109 E This going to be a new tail.
110 Re Yes
111 E Kangaroo!
112 B Mrs Dombey
113 Re What else,
114 What's the,
115 E A giraffe
116 What's that there, little tail?
117 Re Gosh, it's a little tiny tail
 isn't it?
 B *****
118 Re He wants to know what it is,
 doesn't he.
119 E Yes.
120 Re What's that little tiny tail?
121 Is that a
122 E It's a lady
123 Re Is that another mouse?
124 E No
125 Re Whose little tiny tail is that?
126 E A snake
127 B Snake
128 Re Oh it is another mouse
129 And what does this one say?

Holly 9.10.80

130 B Ik{now why it's a mouse.
131 E {they looked for a mouse.
132 Re Yeah
133 E And he's in he's house,
aren't they?
134 The snake went and woke them
135 Re Mm?
136 E Err, inee horrible!
137 B He's horrible.
138 I'm going to bite him
139 I'll tell him.
140 Piaou!
141 Re Turn over the page
142 Let's turn over the page
143 E That, that's why the snake
is there.
144 That's why.

Where the Wild Things Are (with Rebecca (F))

1 Re Now then
2 Is he going to tell Bill the
story?
3 E Um//
4 I can't do it.
5 Re I think you can
6 What happens there?
7 E His doggy and his teddy.
8 Can't read that bit.
9 The dog was in there and
he came and he taked
him out of front room.
10 And he, and he said "Hi"
and he runned down.
11 He didn't like it.
12 "I don't want" his Mum
said
13 "I want to eat you"
14 Re His Mum said what?
15 E He was angry
16 He come to eat you.
17 Re Come to eat you?
18 E Mm
19 One day morning there was,
there was some trees all
over the place.
20 How, where did they come
from, these trees?
21 Re They just grew.
22 E Mine's not in there
23 I'll go and have a look.
24 Re No, it,

25 E There, um
26 I can't read that bit.
27 He said "I didn't, I" he said.
28 His bedroom disappeared.
29 Re His what disappeared?
30 His bed all disappeared?
31 E Can't read this bit.
32 Re His bed all disappeared.
33 Then what happened?
34 E Umm.
35 His bed disappeared.
36 Re And what happened here?
37 E Umm.//
38 There was a dragon
39 He didn't like it.
40 So he went,
41 One day morning there was a
dragon.
42 I don't know this part.
43 He said "Still!"
44 He maked him the king.
45 He said,
46 They're walking along.
47 He said,
48 Who're they?
49 Sent him to bed.

Peter and the Wolf

(with Tracey (D))

1 E Peter is in, in,
2 No, Peter did et, get out the gate
3 And the duck came
4 And, he went "Quack, quack, quack, quack.
5 What are you doing?
6 Can't play with me.
7 You can't swim."
8 "Yes I can"
9 "Look then!"
10 "Look then!"
11 A cat comes there and gets the bird and eats it.
12 And Peter's grandad comes out and pulls and pulls ke,
and pulls Peter in the gate.
13 And the wolf came.
14 And he went snap to his, her legs.
15 "Snap, snap, snap!"
16 And the wolf ate, ate, ate the bir, ate the, the duck,
17 Ate, ate the duck.
18 D You got two
19 E No
20 D We have haven't we?
21 Re Don't think so.
22 E And he,
23 Can't see
24 D And he maked a hole in the,
25 E Rope
26 Maked a hole in the rope.
27 So he tied the rope round the wolf's tail so he
28 couldn't get away.
29 Oh
30 Gran, some painters come

Holly 7.7.81

31 E They went to the zoo.
32 To the zoo.
33 To take the wolf there
34 And that isthe end.

Story tellings by Simon (H) D.O.B. 24.10.76

9.10.80 Tape 2 Side 1 (180-219)

The Tiger who Came to Tea (with Alison (P) and Richard (K))

- 1 Re Charlie can tell us what the story is.
- 2 Mmm?
- 3 H There it is
- 4 Re Can Charlie tell Bill what's happening?
- 5 H Got, got that, and that and that.
- 6 Re Uhu
- 7 H Cor, he's eating that.
- 8 Go away, chased.
- 9 He's having this and this and that.
- 10 He's having that
- 11 He's drunk all that
- 12 Re He's drunk all that
- 13 H Yeah.
- 14 And it's horrible
- 15 Re It's horrible
- 16 H Got sugar in there
- 17 Re It's got what?
- 18 Got sugar in there?
- 19 H Yeah
- 20 Re And what happened next?
- 21 H Now he's got stomach ache
- 22 Re Now he's got stomach ache
- 23 H And that's it.

The Tiger who Came to Tea (with Andrew (N))

- 1 Re You show us the beginning of the story.
2 H There
3 Re Is that the very beginning?
4 H Yeah, then he opened the door and then he won't bring him in.
5 Re He won't let him in?
6 H No
7 Re And then what happened?
8 H And there's, and that's another tiger (2 pictures on facing pages)
9 'Cause it, he wants all that he do.
10 There might,
11 Yeah then he, then he ate all them bubble gums
12 And then he's going to put that there and, then them sweeties
there and them bubble gums.
13 Re And what happens next?
14 H After he wants, he wants all that *****
15 He's eating and he's eating all the tea!
16 He's, he's eating all the cup a teapot in the tea.
17 And all, and all the water in it, in it, in the tap eh?
18 Re Mm, Bill's listening to that
19 H He's naughty isn't he?
20 He's naughty that tiger is.
21 Cor he's cuddling.
22 Cor he's having some more food.
23 Look he's *****
24 He's saying something
25 Re And then what happens?
26 H Cor, look.
27 He's going, he's eat allthat, hasn't he?
28 He's go, he's being naughty
29 Cor, he's eaten all that.
30 Cor
31 Drinking it all up, he is.

32 N Is that a bath?
33 Is that a bathroom?
34 H No, it's the tap.
35 N It says bye bye
36 H "Bye bye" Don't he.
37 Then he says "Oh" and he gets some more food.
38 N And they went to get, to go to a cafe, there.
39 H And there's lights and there's the car's lights and on the bus
and on the houses and the car's lights on and, and,
40 He ate all that and all that ***** eh?
41 Then he ate something, *****
42 Bye bye!

The Bad-Tempered Ladybird (with Desmond (A) and Richard (K))

1 H The Temper Ladybird
2 Fly away

3 Get the, the friends are,
4 All the ladybirds in the night, going to s, are going to go
 home.
5 And then they went on the ladybird and they saw the friends.
6 There's, and there's ladybirds.
7 And there's two ladybirds.
8 "Can I have them?"
9 "No, I'm having them."
10 "Let's share them"
11 "No, no!"
12 I'm having them all up, to eat up."
13 Goes splash in the water.
14 And they clocks.
15 See, the clocks
16 See the clocks, look
17 There, Mrs Dombey, Mrs Dombey, there's clocks.
18 Re Mm there are, aren't there
19 H Yeah
20 And they fly away
21 And there's a bumble bee.
22 Lived in a hive, way a way

23 "Going to eat you all up.
24 Yum Yum!"
25 "No, no no!"
26 Going to fly away
27 And there is a beetle
28 "Shall I eat you up?"
29 "No, no I'm going to eat you up!"
30 And then he's flying away
31 See?
32 He flies away
33 And, there's a horrible monster eeuh!

34 Who went "Ooaherl eat you!"
35 He had dribbly hair and it was funny!
(laughter)
36 Turn over the page and,

37 There was a bird coming along and he said (kissing noise)
38 "Shall I eat you up, all up?"
39 And he said, "No, I'm going to eat you up then."
40 And then he flied away

41 And then there was a horrid monster

42 He said **** "What are you? What are you?"
43 He was friend, he's friend Jerry.
44 He went with, he flied, he flied with the ladybird.
45 Where's the snake?
46 Where's the snake gone?
47 Re There's the snake, isn't it?
48 H Yeah
49 He's only crying, inne?
50 He's crying
51 And then he met the, a monst, he met the tiger.
52 Dinne
53 He didn't see the tiger
54 Stripey tiger
55 He just walked
56 And he flied away.
57 No, no-one couldn't see him.
58 There was a kangaroo.
59 "Where's the ladybird?"
60 And then there was a squirrel.
61 And then a sn
62 "We're going to eat you up!"
63 And the slow worm didn't bite me.
64 I picked, I picked one up and it didn't bite me.

65 Re Slow worms don't do they?
66 And then what happened?
67 H What happens.
68 And he was crying, and poor little, and poor little,
69 What is it?
70 Re It's a hyena.
71 A hyena
72 H Yeah, poor hyena
73 And ***** real up
74 Re Yes
75 H And, and he said "Oh I love to eat anybody up!
76 Mm I'm going"
77 He's going to eat him up.
78 And what, what's his name?
79 Re That one, I think it's a rhino, a rhinoceros.
80 H A rhinoceros
81 And he met a rhinoceros
82 And he talked to the ladybird
83 He didn't saw the ladybird.
84 He saw no-one.
85 The Rhinoceros
86 And he met the elephant.
87 He didn't saw the elephant as well.
88 He's flying away..
89 Fast as he can.
90 And then, a big e, big fat elephant,
91 And he met some,
(Interruption with Desmond fiddling with tape recorder)
92 Re And then what happened?
93 H And then what happened?
94 He, he sawed the big,
95 What is that?
96 What is
97 Re Is that a whale?

98 H A big whale!
99 And he had big teeth
100 And a big mouth
101 Cor!
102 It was going to eat somebody
103 It was darking and darking
104 He went indoors because he was so sad
105 And he didn't have any friends
106 And he was, I'll tell you what happened
107 And then, they,
108 And, and there's friends!
109 There's friend ladybirds!
110 Re Oh, that's nice.
111 H They're sharing it, eh?
112 Because they, they, they got broken legs.
113 Because, because they got knocked over.
114 And they have to go home and fly away.
115 Saw the ladybirds.
116 And they went fast asleep.

Story tellings by Richard (K) D.O.B. 11.11.76

9.10.80 Tape 2 Side 1 (227-242)

Recorded when I was temporarily out of the room.

Do You Want to Be my Friend? (with Alison (P))

- 1 K Do you want to be my friend.
- 2 And that and that and that and that and that and that
 and that and that and that.
- 3 Theres that and that and that and by my friend.
- 4 And that and that and that and that.

The Three Little Pigs (with Michael (V))

1 Re Now, can you tell us what happened?
2 K They're going to get the fox.
3 The fox is eating them.
4 They slipped over and then
 goes into the field and,
 and,
5 And cutting the grass *****
6 They're going in there, field.
7 They're cutting the woodman.
8 And they're going to make hut.
9 And he pulled it down.
10 And their pig, Mum piggy
 tells them *****
11 And he's got *****
12 And he came
13 And ***** he sit there
 in front of them meanwhile.
14 And he, andhe,
15 And he's trodden on the chimney.
16 And he went in the house.
17 And, and then he,
18 And he's foundout.
19 And he's, and he's *****
20 And he out of the house.
21 And he be ***** in the
 window and he ***** trees.
22 And he be ***** them
23 And he, and he needed and
 he goes to get all soap
24 And he, and he feeded the
 ***** down.

25 And he scared of that wolf
26 He runned away of that
 wolf
27 And he, in a little while
 then he *****
28 And he get on there, wolf.
 Wolf.
29 And he, and he, and he,
 and he's three the water
 down.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears (with twin sister Janet (J))

- 1 Re Now then, can you tell us what happens here, Richard?
- 2 K Goldilocks
- 3 Re Uhuh
- 4 K And the three bears
 Daddy, Mummy Bear, Daddy
 Bear and Baby Bear lived
 in a house.
- 5 She, And Goldilocks
- 6 And Goldilocks called in
 there and opened the door
 in there to see what it,
- 7 She ate baby's and she ate
 it all up.
- 8 She broke baby's chair, she
 went,
- 9 She sat on first Daddy's
 chair.
- 10 She went upstairs
- 11 She went fast asleep.
- 12 The three bears come back
- 13 Daddy Bear come back,
 Mummy Bear come back
 and Baby Bear come back.
- 14 And they, Daddy bear doing
 a (*****).
- 15 "Who's been eating my porage^{ridge}?"
- 16 And Mummy Bear said
 "Who's been eating my
 porage^{ridge}?"
- 17 Baby Bear said "Who's
 been eating my porage^{ridge} all
 up?"

18 And they broke, they broken
 the chair.
19 Mummy Bear said "Who's
 been sitting on my chair?"
20 And Daddy Bear said
 "Who's been sitting on my
 chair?"
21 And they went upstairs
 and they said "There she is,
 Goldilocks."
22 And the three,
23 And she runned through a,
 out and went home.
24 And, and they went, they
 lived there after.
25 And there's Goldilocks.

21.1.81 Tape 6 Side 1 24-63

Do You Want to Be my Friend? (with Michael (V) and Andrew (N))

1 Re Now then
 Are you going to tell us that story?
3 O That's about a snake.
4 He goes down along.
5 The snow
6 ***** do you want,
7 Crocodile
8 Do you want a s,
9 I don't know this long crocodile
10 What the mouse said
11 There was a crocodile was *****
12 Aaaaah
13 A trick
14 V A trick
15 A crocodile, a trick
16 O It went Aaaaah!
17 And the bird was on him.
18 The trick and the lion bite
19 Where's it gone now?
20 A lion
21 V It's a hippopotamus
22 O And they want,
23 "Will you be friends?"
24 It was, a sea lion
25 See?
26 A trick again
27 He noticed the monkey
28 But the monkey was monkey *****
29 It was a bird
30 It was a fox
31 It was them
32 They was kangaroos

33 Do *****
34 Do you want to be my fr,
35 A giraffe
36 It's a mouse
37 N Two mice
38 O Two mice
39 A pig mouse
40 That's a pig mouse
41 V A pig mouse
(laughter)
42 N They're both pig mice
43 O And then he goes
44 Whee, whee, wheeeee
45 Then there's snake
46 Mice can't go again
47 That's the end.

Peter and the Wolf

1 0 Peter went out into the garden
2 He went out into the garden to go where the wolf lives
3 Re To go where the wolf lives?
4 0 And there was three, a duck under water and a fish
deep under water.
5 And there was a baby duck and a mummy duck
6 And the cat tried to get the bird
7 But he couldn't
8 He got up very quickly
9 And the bird flew away
10 And the grandfather took him back
11 And the next morning
12 He went *****
13 And the bird was on the tree
14 And he, it went ummmm *****

15 And then it got a rope and roped and,
16 And then it caught the w,
17 It caught the wolf
18 Re He caught the wolf?
19 0 Yes
20 And the men came
21 Re And the men came?
22 0 And took the wolf to the zoo, there's the zoo.

A P P E N D I X I V

Transcripts of teacher's class story readings

Do You Want to be my Friend?

Eric Carle

London: Hamish Hamiton 1971

- 1 T What's it about?
- 2 U Oooh
- 3 U Oooh *Large picture of elephant*
- 4 U Elephant *looking at mouse speaking*
- 5 T It's about an elephant, isn't it. *words of title*
- 6 O It's a pig DO YOU
- 7 U It's a pig WANT TO
- 8 T You want that story, do you? BY MY
- 9 U Can't have that one FRIEND?
- 10 T Right, Are you going to sit on By Eric Carle
 your bottoms?
- 11 This is the {story
 {*****
 G
- 12 T {It's not really,
 {*****
 G
- 13 T {Listen, are you looking at me, -
 {***** -
 G
- T {Christopher?
 G {*****
- 14 T It's not really a story that you read.
- 15 {There's not a lot of writing in the -
 {*****
 O
- T {book that you can read.
 {*****
 O
- 16 T {There are a lot of pictures, aren't -
 {*****
 O
- T {there Lee?
 {*****
 O
- 17 T {And here's a big blue elephant
 {*****
 O
- 18 T And I chose him specially this
 morning because you all looked
 at the blue things on the table.
- 19 And this elephant's saying,
- 20 It's not the elephant who's
 saying, it's a little mouse
 right in the corner and he's
 saying "Do you want to be my friend?"

21 D No
 22 U No
 23 U Ye{s
 24 T {He's saying to that elephant
 25 O Yeah,
 26 U Yeah
 27 U No
 28 T Let's turn over the page
 29 U Yeah, yeah
 30 U No
 31 T What do you think that is?
 32 G Sn(ake
 33 UX {Snake, snake
 34 T You think it's a snake, do you?
 35 Is(it? *Dedication page*
 UX {*****
 36 T (Let's, lets turn over and see
 (*****
 UX (laught(er)
 37 T {Here's the little mouse 'DO YOU WANT TO BE
 again, look. MY FRIEND? BY ERIC CARLE
 38 Can you see the rest of this?
 39 U Yes *Picture of mouse*
 40 T What do you think it is? HAMISH HAMILTON, LONDON
 UX **{*****- *Picture of section of snake*
 41 T {D'you think it's a snake? *Stretching right across*
double spread
 UX {*****Title Page.
 42 T {I,
 43 N {It is a snake *Picture of mouse addressing*
 44 T I wonder if it is. *words of text to horse's tail.*
 45 Christopher, let's turn over the DO YOU WANT TO BE MY FRIEND?
 page and find out. *Picture of section of snake*
 46 G It is a snake *stretching right across*
 47 T We haven't got here yet, have we? *bottom of*
 48 We'(ve got something else on - *double spread*
 49 G {Can't see. 0-1
 T This page
 50 What d'you think this is?

51 U Cat
 52 U Snake
 53 U Lion
 54 T Who d'you think that tail belongs
 to?
 55 UX Horse, horse
 56 T Could belong to a cat
 57 D'you think it's a cat's tail?
 58 UX No, no
 59 U A horse's
 60 T You think it's a horsie
 61 Let's listen to what the mouse
 has got to say.
 62 "Do you want to be my friend?"
 63 U No
 64 U No, smack smack (smacking noise)
 65 T I don't think you're very kind
 at all
 U *****
 66 T Turn over the page and see if it
 is.
 67 T What did you say it was?
 68 Horse
 69 Horse
 70 Horsie
 71 T Aah, let's see!
 72 N Ooh he's an horse
 73 UX Yes!
 74 T {Yes you were right.
 UX {(clapping noises
 75 T {You were right
 UX {-----
 76 Q {He ain't got no tail
 UX {-----
 77 T {No, you see his tail was on the
 UX {-----
 T {other page
 UX {-----}

*Picture of mouse with back to
 horse, looking enquiringly at
 tail of crocodile. Section of
 snake stretches across bottom
 of double spread
 2-3*

78 T And I wonder what the horse
said to the mouse.

79 When the {mouse said to the -
U {***** -
T {horse "D'you want to be my friend?"
U {*****

80 U Yes

81 U Yes

82 T What d'you think he said?

83 D No

84 B No

85 Q Yes

86 U No

87 T Glenda thinks he said Yes and
Tracey and Sonia thinks he
said no.

88 U Why?

89 T Who's the mouse talking to now?

90 What d'you {think this is?
91 U {Why?

92 U A snake

93 T A snake, d'you think?

94 D Snake

UX *****{****
95 T {Shall,
UX *****

96 T I'm going to shut the book
because I think you're being
very silly.

97 D'vou want to find out what's
on the other page?

98 U Yes

99 U Yes

100 T Right, wonder what it is.

101 D'you think it's a, a,

102 U Snake

103 T D'you think it's a snake?

104 U No

105 T I don't think you're right
but we'll turn over the page
and find out.

Picture of mouse scampering
away from corcodile, under
lion's tail. Section of
snake stretches across
bottom of double spread.

4-5

136 T (And I wonder what the crocodile
did to the mouse.

137 N Aargh!

UX *****

138 T No, crocodiles,

139 U Can he *****?

140 U {No

141 T Yes

142 Well the mouse said to the
crocodile "Do you want to be
my friend?"

143 D And he said "No!"

144 U No!

145 T And I wonder what the crocodile
said.

146 U No

147 G Yeah

148 U No

149 T You think yes he does want to
be his friend, Chris?

150 U N(o.

151 U {Yeah

152 T No

153 He certainly doesn't roar like
Simon did {because

154 Y {He's going to bite him

155 He's going to bite that mouse

156 T He's going to bite him, is he?

157 Don't think so really.

158 U {He's got

159 T {I wonder who this tail belongs
to

160 U A lion

161 UX Lion

162 T You think a lion

163 UX Yeah

164 U Everybody *****

165 C I think it belongs to a tiger

166 T You think it belongs to a tiger,
do you?

167 U It's a lion

168 T You think it is? Class story 9.10.80

169 Let's turn over the page and find
out

170 U Find out

171 T Right

172 All ready?

173 UX Yes{Yeah, yeah
174 {No

175 H It's{a lion
176 O {Yeah it's a{lion *Picture of mouse scampering*
177 UX {It's a lion *away from lion and looking*
178 T It is a lion, isn't it. *up at tail of rhinoceros.*
179 U {Mmm *Section of snake stretches across*
180 T {D'you{think *bottom of double spread.*
181 U {Aargh *6-7*

182 T What do you think the lion
said to the mouse when the
mouse said,

183 D Want to come back to the
right place.

184 U That place, over there.

185 T You always say no, Tracey,
don't you?

186 D Yeah{*****
187 U {*****

188 T Let's see what Alison thinks,
listen.

189 Alison, what d'you think the
lion said to the mouse?

190 Don't you know?

191 Y {Will you be my friend.
192 U {I do

193 T No

194 The mouse said to the lion "Do
you want to be my friend?"

195 O Yes

196 H Yes

197 T Let's just see

198 You think yes.
 199 Let's just see
 200 Do you think he's got a happy
 face or a sad face, that lion?
 201 UX Sad{face
 202 U {Happy face
 203 O Can he move?
 204 T Well I think it's,
 205 I don't er,
 206 I used the wrong word.
 207 T I don't really think{he looks sad
 U {*****-
 208 T {I think he looks a bit cross.
 U {*****
 209 U I can{'t see
 210 T {Do you?
 211 U N{o
 212 UX {Yeah
 213 T I think he looks a bit cross, so I
 think it's quite likely that he
 said to the mouse,
 214 H Yeah, he's gonna,
 215 The lion's horrible, he is.
 216 T Yes he's, he looks a bit
 {horrible.
 217 Y {The lion{is a lion
 218 T {I think he said to the
 mouse,
 219 Y The lion
 220 T Christine, listen
 221 I think he said "No thank you.
 222 I don't want to be your friend."
 223 Can you see the beginnings of a
 tail in this picture?
 224 UX No, no.
 225 U Yeah
 226 T Lee's nod,
 227 U A cat!
 228 T Lee's nodding his head.
 229 Can you see the beginnings of
 a tail, Lee?

230 O Yeah.

231 U Yeah.

232 T What colour is it?

233 U Cat

234 UX Blue

235 T It's blue

236 Is it at the top of the
picture or {the bottom?
{*****

237 S Yeah, but its *****

238 T Sh

239 Where is it, Lee?

240 O Top

241 T At the top

242 Who d'you think that tail
belongs to?

243 U A cat

244 U A cat

245 T {A cat with a blue tail?
U {(Wordless singing -----

246 T {Right up there?
U {-----

247 U {No
U {---

248 H {Yeah
U {----

249 T {D'you reckon?
U {-----

250 UX {Yea(h
U {-----

251 T {Shall I turn over the page -
U {-----
T {and find out?
U {-----

252 UX {Yeah
U {----

253 U {Yeah
U {----

254 H {Yeah
U {-----

255 U {Yeah, that's a *Picture of mouse scampering*
 U {----- *away from rhinoceros towards*
 256 T {Cat? *tail of sea lion. Section of*
 U {-----) *snake stretches across bottom*
 257 UX (No! No! ***** *of double spread.*
 ***** *8-9*

258 T Have you ever seen an animal
 like that?

259 U No

260 U N(o

261 UX {Yeah, Yeah *****
 {*****
 262 E {A noceros
 263 T It's a what?
 264 U Got it at school
 265 Y Oceros, oceros
 266 T Oceros?
 267 Y Yeah and that
 268 T What is it?
 269 Y Oceros, oceros
 UX *****

270 T Just a minute, just a minute,
 er Michael said,
 271 D*you know what it is, Michael?
 272 V What is it?
 273 T An(oceros
 UX {*****
 274 T {A roceros
 UX {*****
 275 T {Anybody else know what it is?
 UX {*****
 276 T {Holly, What d'you think?
 UX {*****
 277 U {noceros, noceros
 {*****-
 *****{*****
 278 E {Rhinoceros
 279 T A rhinoceros?
 280 I, er, what did the mouse say
 to him?

281 T What did the mouse say to him?
 282 E Do that *{*** be my friend?
 282 D {No
 284 T "Do you want to be my,
 285 D (No!
 286 T "Do you want to be my friend?"
 287 D No!
 288 UX No
 289 T What did he say to the mouse?
 290 UX No
 291 U Yeah
 292 T Yeah
 293 Right
 294 I'm going to shut the book until
 Sonia sits down
 295 Right.
 296 Christopher, are you enjoying
 this story?
 297 Are you?
 298 U I am.
 299 T Can you see the pictures nicely
 then?
 300 G Yeah
 301 T Can you see a tail on that picture?
 302 U {Yeah
 303 UX Yeah, yeah
 304 U N(o
 305 B {A parrot
 306 T You think it's a bird, it looks
 like a bird.
 307 Doesn't it.
 308 Shall we turn over the page and
 find out?
 309 UX Yeah, yeah.
 310 T Chris, d'you want to see
 what's on the other side of this
 page?
 311 G Yeah

312 T Er, Sonia thinks it's a bird.
313 Let's see whether she's right.

314 U Yeah

315 T Oh n{o, {oh

316 U {No {

317 U {A cat! a cat!

318 T A what is it?

319 B A sea lion

320 T A sea lion

321 A sea lion

322 And the mouse says to him
"Do you want to be my friend?"

323 D No

324 UX Yeah, yes

325 U No

326 T What do you think this is?

327 U Ca{t

328 U {A snake

329 T A snake?

330 UX Yeah *****

{*****

331 C (Let's turn over the page and
find out.

332 T Er, Jamie said "Let's turn over
the page and find out."

333 I wonder if Christopher wants to
turn over {the page and find out

334 U {I saw

335 C Find out.

336 T Chris, d'you think this might
be the tail belonging to your
dog Laddie?

337 G Yeah

338 T Do you think that might be
Laddies' tail?

339 G Yeah

340 T Do you?

341 G Yeah

342 T What, that little black and white
dog that came into the nursery
this morning?

*Picture of mouse scampering
away from sea lion towards
tail of monkey. Section of
snake stretches across bottom
of double spread.
10-11*

343 G Yeah

344 T Let's find out.

345 U Yeah!

346 UX No, {no *Picture of mouse scampering*

347 U {A monkey! *away from clutching monkey*

348 T What is it? *and into tail of peacock.*

349 U A monkey! *Section of snake stretches*

350 T A monkey *across bottom of double*

351 monkey *spread.*

352 And the mouse says "Do you *12-13*
want to be my friend?"

353 U Yes

354 T He's getting ever so {upset

355 D {No!

356 Look, his getting so upset!

357 "Do you want to be my friend?"

358 D No

359 U Yes

360 D No

361 T Can you see this?

362 U No

363 U Yes

364 T What is it?

365 What is it?

366 F A bird

367 T A bird

368 Is it a big bird or a little bird?

369 UX A big bird

370 T Why d'you think it's a big bird?

UX *****{*****-
371 C {Turn over the page and -
UX {**{***** -
C {find{out.
372 T {Ah, but just a minute, Jamie
UX **{*****
373 T {Whyd'you think it's a big bird?
UX *****{*****
374 C {Turn over and see, find out
UX {*****
375 T {Why d'you think it's a big bird?
376 C Co{s it's got a big tail.

377 U }Ooh!
 378 T Good lad.
 379 You're right, it's got it,
 380 Cos it's got a big tail.
 381 Let's find out
 382 U Yes
 383 T Oh! *Picture of mouse with back to*
 384 U Chicken! *peacock, looking horrified at*
 385 T Not a chicken, *tail of fox. Section of snake*
 386 It's not a chicken, no. *stretches across bottom of*
 387 U A{bird *double spread.*
 388 T {No *14-15*
 389 It's called a, shall I tell you?
 390 U No
 391 U A bird
 392 T It is a bird, but we've got a
 special name for a bird.
 393 It's a peacock.
 394 Y Peacock
 395 T And the mouse is getting really
 upset now and he says "Do
 you want to be my friend?"
 396 D No
 397 UX Yeah
 398 D No
 399 UX Yeah
 400 T What d'you think this,
 401 Whose tail is this?
 402 U Fox
 403 U Lion
 404 T A lion?
 405 We've already had a lion
 406 B Fo{x
 407 T {Tiger?
 408 U Tiger
 409 B Fox
 410 T Sonia thinks it's a fox.
 411 Let's see if she's right.
 412 Turn over the page.

413 U A fox
 414 UX Yeah
 415 T A fox, a fox
 416 B I knowed it.
 417 U Woof, woof
 418 T Yes
 419 D'you remember a story that
 we read about a fox?
 420 U Woof, woof
 421 U Aargh!
 422 T Who did the fox give a lift to
 in that other story that we read?
 423 Can anyone remember?
 424 Y Yes
 425 UX Yes
 426 T What, the fox swam across
 the river with somebody on
 his back, who was it?
 427 C Yes it was, it was the ginger-
 bread man.
 428 T It was the gingerbread man.
 429 And the mouse is getting really upset.
 430 "Please would you like to be my friend?"
 431 D No!
 432 UX Yes
 433 D {Nooo!
 434 T {Ooh and look who's here.
 435 Here's the milkman.
 436 Can you afford to wait just two
 minutes, milkman?
 437 Can you?
 438 I, I won't be a sec.
 439 Whose tail is this?
 440 H A lion
 441 U A lion
 442 T You always think,
 443 U Snake
 444 T I don't think Simon really thinks.
 UX *****
 445 U {It's a snake

*Picture of mouse cowering with
 back to fox, perched on tail
 of kangaroo. Section of snake
 stretches across bottom of double
 spread.
 16-17*

UX	**{*****		
446	U	{Kangaroo	<i>Picture of mouse with back to kangaroo jumping up at</i>
	UX	{*****--	<i>tail of giraffe. Section of</i>
447	T	{And whose tail is this?	<i>snake stretches across bottom</i>
	UX	{*****--	<i>of double spread.</i>
448	B	{I don't know	<i>18-19</i>
449	U	{Lion	
	UX	{*****	
450	T	{Another Lion?	
	UX	{*****--	
451	U	{Tiger	
	UX	{*****--	
452	U	{Tiger	
	UX	{*****	
453	T	{Sonia says she doesn't know.	
	UX	{*****{*	
454	T	{er	
455			<i>{A giraffe. Picture of mouse hopping away from</i>
456		Can you see this little tiny	<i>giraffe towards tail of another</i>
		tail there?	<i>mouse. Section of snake stretches</i>
457	UX	Yes	<i>across bottom of double spread.</i>
458	T	Can you see it?	<i>20-21</i>
459	U	I can't see it{*****	
460	T	{Well no because,	
		er, Glend's sitting up.	
461		Good girl	
462		Janet	
463		Here's that	<i>Picture of mouse looking enquiringly</i>
464		What is it?	<i>at second mouse addressing words of</i>
465	U	Lion	<i>text to first mouse across section of</i>
466	T	No, that	<i>snake which winds across page and</i>
467		{He just goes on and on forever	<i>round tree trunk</i>
468	U	{Nooo	<i>22-23</i>
469	T	Look	<i>Picture of mice peering out of hole in</i>
470	Y	That's the wrong way.	<i>base of tree trunk at Section of snake</i>
471	T	Which is the wrong way.	<i>winding across page.</i>
472	Y	That	<i>24-25</i>
473	T	Why?	<i>Picture of head section of snake</i>
474	Y	Cos it's,	<i>winding around double spread and</i>
475		Goes onto the last one.	<i>looking angrily back at previous</i>

476 T Goes onto the last,

477 U A snake

478 T Snake

479 UX A snake (clapping noises ---)

480 T Here he is, look.

Picture of two mice together

481 Right.

in hole under ground

482 Who'd like to show the pictures 28
to the children while I see to
the milkman?

1 T Richard, come { on, sit on-
2 U { *****
 T Your bottom.

3 And we're going to have
 this film about Rosie's
 walk and you'll be able
 to see Rosie and the fox,

4 U Yes

5 T Won't you.

6 And as well, we're going
 to,

7 E I will like that

8 T Do you?

9 { Have you read this? WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE
10 Y { I will like that *Picture of drowsing monster*
11 T What's this one about? *sitting in fantastic scenery with*
12 N The monsters *sailing boat on water in background*
13 T Monsters

14 Y Yeah, monsters STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK

15 T What sort of monsters? *Cover*

16 N Waaaah!

17 T Have you looked at the
 book yourself?

18 Y Yeah

19 N Yeah

20 T You got it from over
 there?

21 Y Yeah

22 T Well we're going to have a
 film about this one as well.

23 So I thought { I would read it,
24 Y { ***** -

25 T { Give it to me please
 Y { *****

26 T Give it to me Christine

27 T Look, please Christine
 28 Stop being so silly.
 29 We're going to have a film
 about this one as well.
 30 { So I thought I would read-
 31 U { There.
 T it to you today so that
 you would know what to
 expect.
 32 D'you like that lovely
 picture?
 33 UX Yeah, yeah
 34 T Let's turn over the page.
 35 Is that where I start
 reading?
 36 N { No
 37 UX { Yeah
 38 T No Is, there's some
 reading here, look.
 39 Where the Wild Things Are
 40 Ooh!

*Picture of two dancing monsters
 showing their claws to grinning
 boy in wolf-suit with crown on
 his head*

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE
 STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK
 PUFFIN BOOKS
 in association with The Bodley Head

flysheet

41 Y Monsters
 42 T How many?
 43 UX Two
 44 T Two
 45 Who do you think this is?
 46 N A monster
 47 T Is it a monster?
 48 UX No
 49 T What is it?
 50 UX { *****
 51 Z { A prince
 52 R { A prince
 53 T Let Katrina tell us
 54 What d'you think it is?
 55 R Prince
 56 T Sh sh
 57 Z Umm

58 Z It's a birdy
 59 T Who is it?
 60 K Birdy
 61 R A prince
 62 U Prince, prince
 63 T Who is it?
 64 UX A prince
 65 T Is it a monster like
 those two monsters?
 66 UX No {no
 67 U {A prince
 68 N Look he's got that on and
 he's got that on.
 69 U {A man
 70 U {A ship
 71 T No
 72 It's a little boy
 73 It's a little boy and the
 story is about a little
 boy and some monsters,
 74 And the little boy's name
 is Max.
 75 UX Max, Max
 76 T Max
 77 The night {Max wore-
 78 U {night
 T his wolf suits,
 79 U Wolf suit.
 80 T And made mischief of
 one kind,
 81 Turn over the page.

2

The night Max wore his
 wolf suit and made
 mischief of one kind
Picture of boy in wolf suit
hammering nail into wall-
papered wall

1 - 2

82 G A monster
 83 T One kind and another
 84 Chasing down the stairs
 85 D'you think, what d'you
 think the dog's doing?
 86 Z Going in the front room.

and another

Picture of boy in wolf suit
brandishing fork and chasing
dog down stairs

3 - 4

87 T He's going in the front
room isn't he.

88 Turn over the page.

89 His mother called him, his mother called him

90 U Mother "WILD THING!"

91 T "Wild thing!" and Max said "I'LL EAT YOU UP!"

92 Y Mother thing! so he was sent to bed without

93 T And Max said, eating anything.

94 U Max *Picture of boy in wolf-suit in*

95 T "I'll eat you up!" *bedroom looking crossly at*

96 U Eat you up! *closed door*

97 T So, he was sent to bed, 5 - 6
without eating anything!

98 D'you think he looks cross?

99 N Yes!

100 T There's his bedroom, look.

101 Does your bedroom look like
that?

102 N No

103 UX No

104 U Yes

105 U Yes

106 T Has it got a lovely soft bed
in it, and flowers,

107 U No

108 T and see the moon through
the window?

109 U No, mine hasn't.

110 Mine's got like that.

111 U Mine's got,

112 E Mine's, mine's, mine's got
toys on the bed.

113 T { That very night in Max's- 3
114 U { Mine's like that. That very night in Max's
T bedroom, a forest grew. room a forest grew

115 A wood grew with all *Picture of boy in wolf-suit*
these trees *sulking, unaware of trees*
growing behind him, all

116 B Oh! *around the bedroom*

117 B They're not allowed in
houses!

118 U They're not allowed in
houses!

119 T And it grew and grew,

120 U and,

121 T and,

122 UX grew!

123 T grew.

124 Ooh I wonder what's
going to happen!

and grew -

*Picture of boy smiling and
dancing in thicker and more
exotic tree growth with grassy
floor but bedroom walls,
window and door still visible*

9 - 10

125 And it grew until it
touched the ceiling!

126 B The ceiling?

127 T And the leaves were all
around and the walls
became the world all

128 U { around
Oh!

129 T His bedroom's disappeared
now, hasn't it?

130 Turn over the page.

and grew until his ceiling
hung with vines

and the walls became the

world all around

*Picture of boy dancing in
forest, with even more exotic
trees and plants and no sign
of bedroom*

11 - 12

131 Z There's a boat in the
water

132 T And an ocean, a sea
came by, all for Max.

133 A private ocean for
Max.

134 Z He went in the boat

135 T With a boat for Max.

136 N Booh!

137 T And if you look, if you
look er at the boat

138 U { at this end of the boat-
A boat!

and an ocean tumbled by

with a private boat for Max

and he saild off through
night and day

*Picture of smiling boy sailing
away in boat labelled "MAX"*

13 - 14

	T	you'll see his name written,	
139		Max.	
140	UX	Max	
141	T	Max	
142	N	A dragon!	and in and out of weeks
143	T	'nd he sailed off through night and day and in and out of weeks and almost over a year	and almost over a year to where the wild things are.
		{ to, where,	<i>Picture of alarmed boy in</i>
144	Z	{ Where's that?	<i>boat by land, with horned</i>
145	T	the wild things are,	<i>monster rearing out of sea</i>
146	Y	Things are	<i>in front of him</i>
147	T	To where the wild things are, Richard.	15 - 16
148		Is Charlie watching as well?	
149	N	Yeah	
150	T	He wants to watch.	
151		Turn over the page	
152		And when he came to the { place where the wild-	And when he came to the
153	Y	{ Monsters!	place where the wild things are
	T	things are,	they roared their terrible roars
154	U	Monsters!	and gnashed their terrible teeth
155	T	they roared their terrible roars and gnashed their terrible teeth and rolled their terrible eyes,	and rolled their terrible eyes and showed their terrible claws
			<i>Picture of cross boy in boat</i>
156	Z	That's, they're monsters.	<i>looking at monsters roaring,</i>
157	T	showed their terrible claws	<i>gnashing and rolling their</i>
			<i>eyes at him</i>
158	U	Yuk!	17 - 18
159	UX	Ugh!	
160	T	Turn over the page	

161 U Ugh! till Max said "BE STILL!"
 162 Ugh! and tamed them with the
 163 T Till Max said "Be still!" magic trick
 164 B Bill still! of staring into all their yellow
 165 T And he tamed them with eyes without blinking once
 his magic trick and they were frightened and called
 166 B trick him the most wild thing of all
 167 T of {staring into all their- *Picture of confident boy, arms*
 168 B {trick *outstretched, looking into eyes*
 T {yellow eyes without blinking *of disconcerted, collapsing monsters*
 169 B {trick 19 - 20
 T once.
 170 U I know her
 171 U Once
 172 T And they were frightened!
 173 E I blink!
 174 T The monsters,
 175 Well you blink, yes, but
 the, Max has got a special
 trick.
 176 He stared at them all
 without blinking and he
 tamed them.
 177 And they were frightened
 of him.
 178 Can you imagine?
 179 All these big monsters
 frightened of Max?
 180 G Yeah.
 181 T Let's find out what
 happens next.
 182 U He stole, all up the
 monster.
 183 T D'you know what they did? and made him King of all wild
 184 They made him King of things.
 them all! ⁵"And now," cried Max
 185 He was their King. "Let the wild rumpus start!"
 186 "And now," cried Max *Picture of boy with crown and*
 187 B I don't, *sceptre accepting homage from*
 188 T "Let the wild rumpus start!" *monsters*
 189 Z Let the rumpus start! 21 - 22
 190 T Let the rumpus start.

191		What d'you think they're doing?	<i>Picture of boy and monsters shouting and dancing</i>
192	E	Chasing him!	<i>with abandon, round trees,</i>
193	T	No I think {they're	<i>to a full moon</i>
194	R	{They're chasing him.	23 - 24
195	T	No.	
196	Y	Look.	
197	T	I think they're dancing all around {those trees.	
198	U	{Yeah.	
199	T	And Max is,	
200	R	He's got a big nose.	
201	T	He has got a big nose, hasn't he.	
202	Y	I don't, I don't like big noses.	
203	T	Don't you like big noses?	
204	N	I, and he's got a big nose.	
205	U	D'you know what my cat's {name is Mrs Gibbins?	
206	R	{And he's got a big nose.	
207	T	No actually I don't think that is a nose	
208	U	Mrs Gibbins	
209	T	Yes, just a minute.	
210		Sh, sh.	
211	U	I er, I er ***** Tiddles	
212	T	Your cat's name is Tiddles?	
213	U	D'you know what my cat's name is Mrs Gibbins?	
214		*****	
215	T	We're not talking about cats now, we're talking about wild things.	
216		And they're having a rumpus.	
217	U	I I {I	
218	T	{And they dance all around the trees,	634

219 U My tree

220 T And I'm going to shut
the book until Christine
sits on her bottom.

221 Because the people behind
you can't see.

222 Right.

223 There they are and now
they're hanging on all
the { branches, having a-
224 E { How do they get down? 25 - 26
T wild rumpus.

225 U Wild rumpus.

226 T I don't know how they
got down.

227 U Look.

228 T Max is up there too.

229 U One { two three four ones

230 T { Now Max is riding
the back of this grey
monster with ex, it
looks like a sceptre in
his hand which tells
everybody that he's King.

231 Turn over the page.

232 Y There. ⁶Now stop!" Max said and sent

233 T D'you want to listen, the wild things off to bed
Christine? without their supper. ⁷And Max

234 Y ***** the king of all wild things was lonely

235 T Well, could you then and wanted to be where someone
do it without interrupting loved him best of all.

236 Right. ⁸Then all around from far away
across the world

237 "Now stop!" Max said. he smelled good things to eat

238 He sent the wild things so he gave up being King of
off to bed. where the wild things are.

239 Wouldn't that be a *Picture of sad boy sitting with*
lovely thing to do! *head on hand in striped tent,*

240 He sent the wild things *surrounded by tired and*
off to bed without their *contented monsters*
supper. 29 - 30

241 B Oh!

242 U { Stop wild things!

243 T { And Max, { the King of all-

244 U { ***** -

245 U { the wild things was lonely.

246 U { *****I got

247 U Stop wild things

248 T Excuse me a minute

249 Excuse me a minute.

250 Christine, go over there.

251 You're just a pain.

252 Andrew wants to listen.

253 "Stop!" said Max and he

sent the wild things

off to bed without any

supper.

254 And Max, the King of

all the wild things was

{ lonely and he wanted-

255 U { you are

T to be s, where someone loved

him best of all

u (laughter)

256 T 'nd where d'you think

that would be?

257 U I done { that after

258 N { There!

259 T If you wanted to be with

somebody who loved you

best of all, where would

you want to be?

260 E Sarah loves me.

261 T Sarah?

262 B And Dominic loves me.

263 T And Dominic, so you'd

{ want to be with Dominic?

264 G { I don't like this monster

265 T Chris, where { would you like-

266 E { *****

T to be?

266 U I want to be a monster.

267 T Well, Max wanted to
be with somebody who
loved him best of all.

268 Then all round from
far away across the
world he smelled good
things to eat.

269 So.

270 He gave up being King of
where the wild things are
and where d'you think
he went?

271 E Look at his big {***** -

272 T { D'you know?

E {*****

273 N { Home.

274 T But the wild things cried
"Oh please don't go!

275 We'll eat you up!

276 We love you so!"

277 And Max said "No!"

278 K No!

279 T And the wild things roared
their terrible roars and
gnashed their Terrible teeth but Max stepped into his private
and rolled their Terrible eyes boat and waved goodbye.
and showed their Terrible
claws and Max stepped
into his private boat and
waved goodbye.

9

But the wild things cried,
"Oh please don't go-

we'll eat you up-we love you so!"

¹⁰ And Max said "No!"

¹¹ The wild things roared their terrible
roars and gnashed their terrible teeth

and rolled their terrible eyes and
showed their terrible claws

but Max stepped into his private
boat and waved goodbye.

*Picture of boy smiling and waving as
he sails away while monsters roar,
gnash and roll their eyes at him*

31 - 32

280 And sailed back, over
a year and in and out
of weeks and through a day

and sailed back over a year
and in and out of weeks
and through a day

*Picture of boy looking down
imperiously from bow of
sailing boat at choppy
waves with full moon in
background*

281 T And into the night of and into the night of his
his very own room. very own room

282 Where he found his where he found his supper
supper waiting for him. waiting for him

*Picture of boy scratching head
in bedroom he left, with full
moon visible through window*

35 - 36

283 And d'you know? and it was still hot.

284 It was still hot! 37
Turns back to previous page

285 U Hot

286 T There he is, look.

287 N Taken off his mask.

288 T He's taken off his mask.

289 E Are we going in there?

290 T Not today, no.

291 Going back to*****

292 You can have a look at
that story if you like,

293 Did you enjoy it?

294 UX Yeah

295 T Did it frighten you?

296 UX No

297 U No

298 T Which bit did you like
best?

299 N The Monsters

300 U Monsters

301 U I {don't like monsters.

302 T {D'you think you could
be, Darren, d'you think
you could be a king of
the monsters, have
enormous monsters in
this room?

303 S Yes

304 T And would you like saying
to them "Stop!"

305 Go {to bed without any-

306 U {Stop! 638

T supper."

307 Would you like to do that?

308 N { No

309 U { Yes

310 UX Yes

311 E I would.

312 I, I, I would

313 Z I would

314 T Would you like to be
able to say to your
mummy "Go to bed
without any supper!"

315 U No!

316 UX No!

317 E I would!

318 T I wanted to do that when
I was a little girl
sometimes.

Rosie's Walk Pat Hutchins Puffin, 1970

1 T Last bottom to sit down Lee
gets a smack.

2 U It's Lee

3 U It's Lee

4 T It is Lee isn't it?

5 Don't you notice

6 Last bottom to sit down, Lee
gets a smack.

7 U Christine

8 T Ah well, we're going to forgive
Christine 'cause she was
doing something.

9 But ooh it's Chrissy, ooh
it's Chrissy.

10 So, a hard or a soft smack?

11 UX Hard

12 U Soft

13 T Person,

14 U Soft

15 T Person,

16 U Hard

17 U Hard

18 U Hard

19 T No no no, person, no person
being smacked chooses.

20 Chrissy, hard or soft?

21 Smack?

22 G Soft.

23 H (laughter) I'm going to
smack him hard.

24 O I'm going to smack
{ him later.

25 T { shsh.

26 No you're not Simon.

27 { Everybody on { their bottoms -

28 O { Going to say {

29 O { Hard or soft, -

29 T { Please,
 O { hard or,
 30 T { come on.
 31 UX { *****
 32 T { Quickly
 UX { ***** -
 33 T { No
 UX { ***** -
 34 T { You're being silly now.
 UX { ***** -
 35 T { Who's this?
 UX { ***** -
 36 T { It's Lee
 UX { ***** -
 37 T { Janet, Janet
 UX { ***** -
 38 T { (Claps hands) D'you want to-
 UX { *****
 T turn round and face this way.
 39 Erm, Des,
 40 S Rabby, rabby, rab,
 41 T Who chose this story?
 42 S { Me
 43 UX { ****
 44 T Me.
 45 { Look what's this story about?
 46 UX { *****
 47 H Foxy Glenda.
 48 T Who is it about?
 49 H { Foxy Glenda
 50 A { Oh look
 51 U Oh look, { someone shouted look.
 52 T { no,
 53 Sh
 54 UX { ***** { ***** -
 55 U { Rosie, Rosie.
 56 T { Lisa, would you mind sitting
 UX { ***** -
 T { with Lee please.
 UX { ***** -
 57 T { Rosie's Walk.
 UX { ***** -

ROSIE'S WALK

By PAT HUTCHINS

*Picture of carefree hen
 walking through cluttered
 rural scene, followed by
 watchful fox
 Cover*

58 T { Here we go.
UX { ***** -

59 U { Rosie's Walk
UX { ***** -

60 U { I can't see
UX { ***** -

61 T { Get where you can.
UX { ***** -

62 U { I can't see
UX { ***** -

63 T { Rosie's Walk
UX { ***** -

64 T { Who've we got in this picture?
UX { ***** -

65 T { We've got,
{ ***** -

66 T { Who've we got in this picture?
{ ***** -

67 T { The fox and er,
{ ***** -

68 { Rosie
UX { ***** -

69 T { And Rosie
UX { *****

70 T Here's Rosie Look, sitting
in her beautiful hen house.

71 T All cosy and warm

72 U { They had this er, they had this,

73 T { Rosie lives on a farm and
we've got a lovely tree, a
lovely tree there, a tractor,

74 S I've got a blue jumper

75 T And a

76 S { I've got a blue { jumper.
77 UX { ***** { ***** -
78 T { All the,
{ beehives
UX { ***** -

79 S { I've got a blue jumper
UX { ***** -

80 T { All the beehives.
UX { ***** -

81 T { There she goes, look.
UX { ***** -

82 T { Rosie the hen, decides to-
UX { ***** -

T { go for a walk.
UX { ***** -

83 U { Yeah
UX { ***** -

84 T { And she comes down,
UX { ***** -

85 A { Look there's tractor.
UX { ***** -

86 T { Trip { trap, trip trap, trip trap.
UX { **** { ***** -

87 U { There's the wheel

88 U { There's the wheel
UX { *****

89 T And, { and who's watching her?

90 U { There's one wheel.

91 H The fox.

92 UX { The fox.

93 U { The Wheel

94 T { The fox.

95 U { (*****)

95 T What does the fox want
to do with her?

96 UX Bite, { eat her, eat her,
97 H { Eat her

98 T Eat her.

99 And he hides under the
hen house and has a look.

100 But Rosie just keeps on
walking.

101 Turn over the page

102 U Rosie come out

103 T Rosie walks across the
yard, by the rake and the
fox thinks "Ooh good, now
I can get her," and jumps.

104 And what d'you think happens?

105 N He bangs into the rake

106 T Shall I turn over the page?

107 Y Huh.

*Picture of hen setting out
across picturesque farmyard
with fox eyeing her greedily
from under hen-house*

2

Rosie the hen went for a walk

1 - 2

*Picture of hen walking past
fruit trees, unaware of fox
jumping after her
across the yard*

3 - 4

108 T He bangs on the rake and *Picture of hen walking on*
the rake jumps up and *unaware while fox bumps his*
hits him on the... *nose on rake he has landed on*

109 H Nose *5 - 6*

110 T But Rosie just keeps on...

111 J Walking

112 T Walking

113 G { I can't see

114 A { Walking.

115 T Over the page

116 Around the pond and the *Picture of hen walking beside*
frogs are all there sitting *pond, unaware of fox jumping*
{ on the stones and I think *after her. No fish in picture.*
{ that- *around the pond*

117 U { I had birthday *7 - 8*

T { they're saying "Oh Rosie, oh-

118 U { What's that?

T Rosie

119 Look!

120 Mind the fox!"

121 But Rosie can't see the
fox and she doesn't seem
to be taking any notice at all.

122 She just keeps on walking,
{ walking, walking,

123 O { The fox'll splash in the water
won't he?

124 T { And the fox thinks "Ooh, good.

125 U { *****

126 T { Now's my chance.

127 U { And he ***** -

128 T { I'm going to
U { fox then.

129 T Take a mighty big jump

130 AC Look { this

131 T { And get hold of Rosie.

132 And there's the bird sitting at
the top of the tree thinking
"Ooh he's going to get Rosie!"

133 O But { he won't.

134 U { if he want to.

135 T D'you think he will?

136 O No he'll splash in the water
137 D No
138 T And he takes a mighty big *Picture of hen walking*
jump, splash into the pond *on unaware of fox landing in*
139 UX Oh! (laughter) *the pond. No fish in picture*
140 T The frogs all jump away *9 - 10*
141 The bird flies away but
Rosie just { keeps on...
142 UX { keeps on/walking
143 S { chicken
144 T Walking
145 S Chicken.
146 T Over the page
147 Y It's not a chicken.
150 S It is.
151 T Rosie walks up and over *Picture of hen walking over*
the haystack. *haycock unaware of fox*
152 H It's a ***** *right behind her*
153 T Two little mice watching *over the haycock*
her all quietly. *11 - 12*
154 There's the goat.
155 D'you think the goat can
see the fox?
156 D { Yeah
157 UX { Yeah
158 H Yeah.
159 No.
160 And the goat, and the goat
can eat the fox up.
161 T D'you think he can?
162 H Yeah
163 T I bet he's thinking "Ooh Rosie
Look behind you, the fox
is following you!"
164 U { Some
165 T { And the fox thinks,
166 Y He's going to splash after it.
167 T What does he think?
168 Y He's { going to splash over it.
169 G { There's a mouse up there.

170 T There's a mouse there.
 171 D'you think the mouse is
 172 U { trying to -
 { *****
 T tell Rosie something?
 173 S He got two mouse.
 174 T Two mice, two mice there look.
 175 S He got ***** there.
 176 T He's not a mouse, he's a hamster.
 177 U Mouse, it's it's,
 178 Y He got two hamsters.
 179 U *****
 180 T Turn over the page.
 181 U Where you got to go?
 182 T Turn over the page.
 183 Ooh the fox jumps out of the haystack and it all collapses on top of him. *Picture of hen walking away from haycock unaware of fox buried in it*
 UX (laughter) *13 - 14*
 184 T It all comes
 185 U *****
 186 AA Oh.
 187 T It all comes.
 188 AA Oh he fell in the grass up.
 189 T He's covered in grass.
 190 U Stop it.
 191 T The hay all { collapses all on-
 192 U { *****
 T top of him it all comes -
 U *****
 T tumbling down.
 193 The mice all { scuttle away
 194 U { ***** -

 195 T The goat was very { surprised.
 196 U { ***** -
 T { wasn't he Janet?
 U { *****
 197 T The goat looks very surprised.
 198 Y One two three.
 199 T But Rosie just { keeps on { walking
 200 O { keeps on { walking
 201 U { walking

202 U I can't see.
 203 T Over the { page.
 204 U { Janet's { *****
 205 U { Yah (laughter)
 206 T Rosie walks past the mill. *Picture of hen walking past*
 207 There's the mill look, *mill unaware of catching her*
 where they grind the *foot in pulley rope, and of*
 { flour that goes into our bread. *fox following her*
 208 S { that's my car. past the mill
 209 My car ***** 15 - 16
 210 T There's the goat still
 tethered, still tied up there.
 211 What do we call that
 Mrs Parkes, I can never
 { remember.
 212 S { Car
 213 U *****
 214 Y The goat
 215 T { The goat?
 216 U { *****
 217 Re { A gopher, isn't it?
 218 UX { *****
 219 T { A gopher isn't it.
 UX { *****
 220 O A squirrel
 221 T { A squirrel
 222 U { ***** -
 223 T { It looks like a squirrel
 U { ***** -
 224 T { Actually.
 U { *****
 225 J It's a gopher.
 226 T There's the goat.
 227 { But Mrs Dombey says she -
 228 U { ***** -
 T { thinks that's a gopher.
 U { ***** -
 229 T { A little animal.
 U { ***** -
 230 T { Just sitting watching, Rosie.
 U { *****
 231 T And do you { know what happens?
 232 U { *****

233 U No.
 234 T D'you know what happens?
 235 G There's a rope.
 236 T Yes, there's a rope. *Picture of hen walking on*
 237 Rosie gets the rope caught *unaware of fox submerged*
 round her leg, and that *in flour behind her*
 piece of rope is holding up *17 - 18*
 that very heavy bag of
 flour, and she gets it caught
 round her leg and the fox
 sits there thinking "Ooh, this
 is my chance to get Rosie".
 238 { She just keeps on walking.
 239 G { Did that, did that, did that
 chicken get up there?
 240 T Pardon, Chris?
 241 G Up in { there.
 242 A { up there.
 243 T What's up there?
 244 A Up *****
 245 G Did that chicken get in there?
 246 T The chicken's in there?
 247 A Yes.
 248 T D'you think there's, there's
 another chicken in there, do
 you?
 249 I don't know, there might be.
 250 Rosie gets the rope caught
 round her foot and, the
 flour tumbles down all on
 the fox.
 UX (laughter)
 251 T That stops him, doesn't it?
 252 U Mm.
 253 T But Rosie just { keeps on...
 254 UX { keeps on walking
 255 T Walking.
 256 Over the page, she goes through *Picture of hen walking through*
 a gap in the fence. *gap in fence unaware of fox*
 257 U ***** *jumping behind her*
 258 T Through the fence but the fox *through the fence*
 259 u { mm *19 - 20*
 { thinks "Ooh now I can jump
 right over that fence. 648

260 A It's,
 261 T And jump right down over
 the other side and gobble
 her all up."
 262 D No
 263 A Yes
 264 S Yes
 265 Y No
 266 A Yes
 267 Y No
 268 A Yes
 269 T So he jumps over the fence,
 270 A She's smacking my head.
 271 T Really I think she's getting *****
 272 She doesn't like you saying
 what you're saying about the
 story.
 273 But she shouldn't smack you
 on the head, should she.
 274 The fox jumps over the fence,
 lands on that old cart, look,
 turn over the page, goes on
 the cart, the cart goes down
 the hill, but Rosie just
 { Keeps on walking.
 275 UX { Keeps on walking.
 276 T Turn over the page.
 277 Ooh.
 278 The { cart bumps into the beehives
 279 U { caught
 280 B And he caught.
 281 T D'you think the bees like it?
 282 UX { No
 283 A { ***** they caught.
 284 T No they all come { out of their
 285 U { oh.
 T { hives.
 286 U { *****
 287 T { What d'you, what sound d'you -
 U { ***** -
 T { think they're making when -
 U { *****
 T { they come out of their,
 288 U { Boo

*Picture of hen walking on
 unaware of fox landing in
 farm cart behind her*

21 - 22

*Picture of hen walking on
 under behives unaware of
 fox in runaway cart tumbling
 beehives behind her*

under the beehives

23 - 24

289 T { Bzzz
 290 UX { Bzzz
 291 T Rosie just { keeps on walking.
 292 UX { keeps on walking.
 293 T Over the page.
 294 Oh look, where's the fox gone? *Picture of hen walking on,*
 295 Bz { zzz *unaware of tumbled beehives*
 296 U { zzz *behind her, and fox*
 297 H They all gone onto the fox. *running away pursued by bees*
 298 T They're all { gone after the, 25 - 26
 299 H { They're going after
 the fox.
 300 T They've all gone flying after
 the fox.
 301 AA I want to know { where he's-
 302 H { Yes
 AA gone to.
 303 T { Pardon?
 304 A { There's a snake.
 305 T { The fox has gone up the hill.
 306 U { *****
 307 A There's a snake.
 308 U That,
 309 T D'you think he's happy?
 310 H No
 311 UX No
 312 A No he's cross
 313 T D'you think he's u,
 314 A He's cross
 315 U Yeah,
 316 T There is, look, right away
 in the distance { over the hill.
 317 U { I can't see him.
 318 H That's why he keeps on getting that,
 319 D I got,
 320 H getting that hen and eating her up.
 321 T He wanted to get that hen and
 eat her up, didn't he.
 322 Rosie just keeps on walking, -
 323 U walking.
 T right round the farmhouse trap trap
 trap trap { trap 650

324 U (trap trap {trap
 325 T {And, *Picture of hen entering*
 326 H And then she came home *hen-house*
 327 T got back in time for... and got back in time for
 328 UX dinner. dinner
 329 T dinner. 27
 330 A dinner.
 331 T There.
 332 A That's orange
 333 T Thank you for choosing {that-
 334 A {that's -
 T {story, Desmond.
 A {orange now.
 335 T That's a lovely story, isn't it?
 336 H That ain't {Desmond.
 337 U {***** Darren
 338 T Darren.
 339 {That's Desmond and that's Darren
 340 Y {There's Darren.
 341 T Darren.
 342 Oh dear.
 343 Thank you very much.

- 1 T {This story this(morning is -
 UX {*****
 2 U {We done that. *Fish is Fish*
 Picture of Fish with wings
 T {about the fish
 UX {***** *Leo Lionni*
 3 U {Done that *Picture of fish in water*
 UX {*****
 4 H {The fish
 UX {*****
 5 T {Can(you see?
 UX {***{*****
 6 A {And one's a{dicky bird
 7 H {A flying
 {bird.
 UX {****-
 8 T {Pardon?
 UX {***** -
 9 A {It's upward.
 UX {***** -
 10 A {Upward.
 UX {*****
 11 H {00000000000000000000{0000
 UX {*****{****
 12 D {Oh
 13 T Its{not, they're both fish, Lee-
 UX {*****
 T {And Simon
 UX {*****
 14 D {Owww
 UX {*****
 15 T {Simon, come on now. Michael, -.
 UX {*****
 Lee.
 16 T Let's open the page and see
 what happens in this story.

17	T	{Fish is Fish.	Leo Lionni
	U	{*****	
18	T	Yes, isn't it a lovely picture	Fish
		with all those weeds, look.	is
19	T	And{I think this is,	Fish
20	H	{Is that seaweed?	
21	T	Yes.	
22	T	D'{you think it is seaweed?	Abelard.London
23	U	{I like that	
24	H	Yeah, and they're going	<i>Print set in picture of waving</i>
		to grow into flowers.	<i>water weeds</i>
25	T	Are{they?	<i>Title Page</i>
26	Y	{for the fishes	
27	R	I know ***** my	
		teddy bear.	
28	T	I, I think it's supposed to	
		be under the water.	
29	U	Boo	
30	T	At the edge of the woods there	At the edge of the woods there
		was a pond, and there	was a pond, and there a minnow and
		{a minnow, here's a minnow, -	a tadpole swam among the weeds.
	U	{***** -	They were inseparable friends.
	T	{Look, a minnow and a -	<i>Picture of minnow and tadpole</i>
	U	{*****	<i>greeting each other amid waving</i>
	T	{tadpole swam among the -	<i>water weeds.</i>
	U	{***	2
	T	weeds.	
31	T	And they{were	
32	A	{Tadpoles	
		goes in the pond.	
33	T	Yes	
34		They were very good	
		{friends	
35	U	{Miss Piggy wants to go	
		in the pond {*****	
36	U	{If she be in	
		the water,	

37 T Fish go{in the water
 38 U {Oh there's a duck
 39 T They were the very best
 friends
 40 O I don't like you
 41 T One morning, One morning the tadpole discovered
 42 U Look that during the night he had
 43 T The tadpole found out, that grown two little legs
 in the night he had grown two "Look", he said triumphantly.
 little legs! "Look, I am a frog!"
 44 Fancy waking - "Nonsense," said the minnow. "How
 (Laughter) could you be a frog if only last
 T {up in the morning, Lee, - night you were a little fish, just
 45 B {two little legs! like me!"
 T Lee, fancy waking up in They argued and argued until
 the morning and finding finally the tadpole said, "Frogs
 that you'd grown two little are frogs and fish is fish and
 1, legs. that's that!"
 46 {"Look," he said - *Picture of minnow and tadpole*
 47 B {Two little legs *with beginnings of two legs*
 T To his friend, *3 and 4*
 48 B Two{legs
 49 T {"I've grown into a frog!"
 50 "Nonsense!"
 51 AA He's{grown into a{frog!
 52 T {said the fish}
 53 A {Where
 the hands are?
 54 T "How could you be a frog?"
 55 A Where the hands are?"
 56 T "Last night you were a
 little fish just like me."
 57 And d'you know they had
 a row, and they argued
 and argued and argued
 until at last he said
 to him "Well I am a frog
 and that's that."
 58 Frogs are frogs and fish
 is fish and that's that.

59 T Got very cross
{with each other.

60 A {Snake goes in the water

61 T I don't{know

62 A {Snake goes{in the -

63 U {Oh oh oh!

A water

64 T D'you know the tadpole's legs In the weeks that followed, the
got longer and longer and tadpole grew tiny front legs and
longer! his tail got smaller and smaller.

65 A No *Picture of minnow and tadpole*

66 T Well,{and his tail, *swimming under flowering*

67 A {That's why I got, my *water lilies.*
tadpoles have got legs. *5 and 6*

68 U We've got a lot,

69 T And his tail got shorter
and shorter and shorter.

70 {D'you think he could,

71 A {And he got,

72 A He hasn't got legs

73 T He is, he's growing legs,
look.

74 D'you think his friend
the fish looks pleased?

75 H Y, no

76 T You don't{*****

77 U {Make him cross

78 T He looks very cross, doesn't
he?

79 U And actually Lee, I think
you might be right, because
you know, we've got lovely
flowers.

80 Y {Sheila *** got one of them

81 U {I've got a frog at home

82 T Has she?

83 Yes but what I'm saying is,
Lee at the beginning of the

T book said "Those weeds are
going to grow into flowers."
84 And I think perhaps I was
wrong.
85 I think perhaps they weren't
weeds.
86 Because, there are some
flowers there now look.
87 Can you see the flowers on
the surface of the water?
88 U {Oh yes
89 H Yeah, they grewed.
90 I, I'm right I am.
91 T Let's turn over and see
what happens next.
92 A Oh
93 T {And then, one fine day that - And then one fine day, a real
94 H {He's going to frog now, he climbed out of the
T tadpole grew into a lovely frog water and onto the grassy bank
95 {And here he is look, *Picture of fish watching frog*
96 U {Oooh *climb out of the water.*
U *****{***** *7 and 8*
97 T {And because
he turned from a tadpole
into a frog, he didn't need to
have to stay under the water
any more.
98 {To be able to breathe.
99 A {Yes he does,
100 T He cli(mbed out of the water.
101 A {He does go in, in, in
the water.
102 O And he, and he goes in the
water doesn't he?
103 T He does go in the water.
104 Frogs do go in the water.

105 But most of the time, when
 {they turn{into frogs they go on-
 106 A {Fish, {can't go,
 T the land.

107 Y And the frogs and ducks go
 in the pond.

108 T Ducks swim on the top of the
 pond, yes.

109 The fish, he'd grown as well

110 U Oh

111 T He'd got bigger and bigger.

112 And he missed his friend,
 when{his friend had gone out-

113 U {Oh
 T of the pond.

114 T He felt very sad.

115 A Wants,

116 T He was in there,(in that big-

A (***** -

T pond all by himself, look.

117 O {They might get another f,

A {*****

118 T They might get another fish.

119 Let's turn over the page
 and find out.

120 A O(h

121 T {Oh! One day, with a
 happy splash the frog
 jumped back into the pond.

122 "Where have you been?"
 said the fish excitedly.

123 "Oh, I've been hopping all
 over the world." said the
 frog.

124 "I've seen some marvellous
 things!

125 "Some extraordinary things!"

126 A Oh we *****

The minnow too had grown and
 had become a fully-fledged fish.

He often wondered where his
 four-footed friend had gone. But
 days and weeks went by and
 the frog did not return.

*Picture of fish with water
 weeds in pond.*

9 and 10

Then one day with a happy splash
 that shook the weeds, the frog
 jumped into the pond. "Where have
 you been?" asked the fish
 excitedly.

"I have been about the world -
 hopping here and there," said
 the frog, "and I have seen
 extraordinary things."

*Picture of minnow looking up
 eagerly as frog jumps into pond.*

11 and 12

127 U He got some(plaster on his-

128 T {"Like what?" -

U {leg.

T {said the fish.

129 U School.

130 T {What's,

131 Y {Lots, of fishes

132 T "What exciting things

{have you seen?"

133 A {Lots of fishes,

134 T "Well," {said the frog,

135 A {Lots of fishes

136 Y One, two, three, four, five,

six,{seven

137 T {No

138 U One{two

139 T {"Birds.

140 T {I've seen birds."

141 A {one two

142 A {One two

143 Y {One two I done it

144 T {said the frog

145 U One two three

146 T {"Birds" he said "are like -

147 Y {Four five haw hee ha

T fish{but they,

UX (*****

148 T Sh, let's just listen a minute.

UX

149 T {Cos some of you are talking so-

150 U {What?

T much that you can't all listen.

151 Lea, go and sit over there

please.

152 Michael wants to listen and

you're being a pest.

153 U And *****

"Like what? asked the fish.

"Birds," said the frog mysteriously.

"Birds!" And he told the fish

about the birds, who had wings,

and two legs, and many, many

colours.

As the frog talked, his friend

saw the birds fly through his

mind like large feathered fish.

"What else?" asked the fish

impatiently.

Picture of frog talking to minnow

with balloon emerging from

minnows head containing four

fish-like creatures with wings.

13 and 14

154 T "Birds" said the frog,
 "They're almost the same shape
 as fish but they have wings
 (and two legs

155 B (wings

156 T {And

157 Y {And my fishes

158 T {Yes

159 Y {They're like my sister's and
 brother's

160 T "What else did you see?"

161 T Let's see what else the frog
 saw.

162 "Cows" said the frog.

"Cows", said the frog. "Cows!"

163 "I saw cows.

They have four legs, horns,

164 Cows have four legs and horns
 and they eat grass.

eat grass, and carry pink
 bags of milk."

165 And they carry pink bags of
 milk."

*Picture of frog talking to
 minnow with balloon emerging*

166 They do, {don't they?

from minnow's head containing

167 U {hm

fish-like creature with horns,

168 A N(o

udder and grass in mouth.

169 B {And it just, {look it's under 15 and 16

170 T {They do

B He's tail.

171 Y And wagging he's tail.

172 T And he's got a tail like a fish,

{that one has, hasn't he.

173 A {And wagging he's tail.

174 T Turn{over the page.

Class Story 6.9.78

175 Y {He's crying. "And people!" said the frog. "Men
 176 T "And{people! said the frog. women, children!" And he talked
 177 Y {miaou, miaou, miaou and talked until it was dark in
 178 T "I saw people. the pond.
 179 I saw men, women and children But the picture in the fish's
 180 B And they're frogs! mind was full of lights and
 181 T And they talked and colours and marvellous things
 {talked and talked and he couldn't sleep. Ah, if he
 182 U {And a frog could only jump about like his
 183 T {Actually they do look a bit -friend and see that wonderful
 184 V {They fish! world.
 185 T like fishes, don't they. *Picture of frog talking to minnow*
 186 V They fish! *with balloon emerging from*
minnow's head containing two
fish-like creatures wearing
clothes and walking upright.
17 and 18
 187 T There we are look *No text, but picture of an*
 188 B Frogs *assortment of fish-like*
 189 T This one looks a{bit like a- *creatures with features of*
 190 U {And the- *birds, cows and humans and*
 T {Cow but a bit like a{fish,- *butterflies in the background.*
 U {butterfly {fly *19 and 20*
 doesn't he?
 191 A And the butterfly
 192 T And the butterfly
 193 And fish that look a bit like
 birds, with wings, look.
 194 U Yeah

195	A	Flying{in the sky!	
	U	{*****	
196	T	{(And then the frog went-	And so the days went by.
	U	{*****-	The frog had gone and the fish
	T	{(back again.	just lay there dreaming about
	U	{*****	birds in flight, grazing cows,
197	T	{(He went off and the bir,-	and those strange animals, all
	U	{*****-	dressed up, that his friend
	T	{(and the fish was very unhappy-	called people.
	U	{*****	One day he finally decided
	T	again, look, he was feeling	that come what may, he too
		very sad.	must see them. And so, with a
198	V	He got his{*****	mighty whack of the tail, he
199	T	{One day,	jumped clear out of the
	U	*****	water onto thebank.
200	V	He jumped	<i>Picture of grim looking</i>
201	T	That's right, he does.	<i>minnow jumping out of</i>
202		One day he decides{that he'd-	<i>pond onto bank with</i>
203	V	{he	<i>water flowers behind</i>
	T	like to get out of the water	<i>21 and 22</i>
204	U	Darren come{down *****	
	T	{(and go into the	
		world and see what he could	
		see, to see whether he could	
		see birds, and men and	
		women and children.	
205		And cows.	
206		He{landed in the dry warm-	He landed in the dry warm
207	Y	{(Don't he?	grass and there he lay
	T	gras{s, and there he{gasped-	gasping for air, unable to

208 Y {Dry {**** breathe or to move. "Help,"
T {and groaned 'cos a fish can't- he groaned feebly.
Y {***** *Picture of minnow lying on*
T live outside of water for very *his back on bank beside pond.*
long. *23 and 24*

209 He began to die.

210 He started to shout "Help!"

211 O But the frog might push
him back.

212 T D'you thing he might?

213 Let's find out and see.

214 There{he is look!
215 A {Oh!

216 T Lying on his back!

217 A He's showing he's, he's tail.

218 T Luckily the frog who'd been *Luckily the frog, who had been*
hunting butterflies nearby, *hunting butterflies nearby, saw*
saw him. *him and with all his strength*
219 A No, not near{him *pushed him back into the pond.*
220 {And{had *Picture of frog pushing minnow*
221 B {And Lee *back into pond*
was right. *25 and 26*

222 T Yes, Lee was right.

223 And with all his strength,
you know how when your're
feeling very strong, with all
his strength, he pushed the
fish back into the pond.

224 T That was a good friend

{wasn't it?

225 O {And he never died, did he?

226 T I don't know.

227 Let's turn over the page and
find out.

228 He never died.

229 U He wasn't

230 U Oh!

231 H He did!

232 T There we are, look.

234 S He didn't

235 T He's very happy now.

236 He looksback up to his friends,

{sitting on a{sitting on a{lily-

237 H {He did

238 U

{He did

{He did

T leaf,

239 S ***** he's mum.

240 T And he said

241 U Has he got back up?

242 T "You were right.

243 Fish can't live out of
water.

244 V No, 'cos they,{they live in-

245 U {fish can jump

water

246 T Fish is fish

247 B Oh

Still stunned, the fish floated about for an instant. Then he breathed deeply, letting the clean cool water run through his gills. Now he felt weightless again and with an ever-so-slight motion of the tail he could move to and fro, up and down, as before.

The sunrays reached down within the weeds and gently shifted patches of luminous colour.

This world was surely the most beautiful of all worlds. He smiled at his friend the frog, who sat watching from a lily leaf. "You were right" he said. "Fish is fish."

*Picture of minnow in pond
talking to frog on lily leaf
27 and 28*

248 V Cos they{can't go, but they-
 249 U {Oh fish is fish is†
 V can jump

250 T Yes but frogs aren't fish
 are they?

251 {They start off by being fish
 252 V {No 'cos{they
 U {*****{*****
 253 T {They grow little legs -
 U {*****
 T {and turn into frogs that can-
 254 U {*****{*****
 T {go on land
 255 {Don't they?
 U together.

256 V Yes

257 T That's the end of the story.

258 D'you likethat story?

259 UX Yeah

260 U I do

261 O D'you know what I like?

262 O I like the fish got{out the
 U {*****
 T {pond and the frog put him-
 U {*****-
 T {back.
 U {****-

263 T {You were right.
 U {*****

264 T {Had you looked at this-
 U {*****-
 T {book before?
 U {*****{*****
 265 U {No
 266 O No
 267 T No?
 268 O No.
 269 I just knew
 U *****
 270 H Now{r, now read the monster-
 271 T {You just knew, did you?
 H {and that.
 272 T {Well actually we're not going
 to have time, 'cos we're going
 to have to have milk and
 apple now{if we're going
 273 U {***** do some
 cooking.
 274 When are we going to do cooking?
 275 T You can have a look at that
 Lee, if you want to later on.

A P P E N D I X V

Transcripts of children's cooperative story
'readings' in class

Story 'reading' in class by Sereen (R), Rebecca (F) and Glenda (Q)

10.12.80

Peter and the Wolf

- R Peter
All the spots (referring to spots on end papers)
Peter again.
Duck in the pond
Then the duck disappeared.
- F (looking at book upside-down across the table)
His father took him away and he's hungry.
- R His father took him away and he's hungry and the
wolf comes, the wolf, the wolf comes after the cat.
- F The wolf came up the tree
- R Yes the wolf come up the tree after the cat.
Did the wolf came up the tree after the cat?
Yes he did, din he.
And who was wolf came up there?
And who was he coming up?
- F The duck
- R Yes the duck
(Q joins the group)
- R And the wolf climbing up the other birds, din it.
And he got the, and it caught the wolf on a piece of rope.
- F) Quack quack
- Q) Quack quack
- R And there's the duck inside, inside the wolf.
- Q Tummy
- R And then the duck, and there's Peter
Where's Peter?
He's round the wrong way (Page is loose and upside-down)
- Q And the hunter
- R And his granny
- Q Now we've finished.
- R And that's the side of it.

Story "reading" in class by Rebecca (F), Glenda (Q) and Desmond (A))

19.5.81

Extracts from Kevin's Ice-cream

A } This is Kevin the Kitten
F }
Q }

		Printed Text
F	(points to words as she "reads")	
	<u>Ice-cream in his mouth and over</u>	<i>Picture of kitten with</i>
	<u>his face and over his nose</u>	<i>ice cream on his nose</i>
		It was stuck to his nose
Q	I like ice creams	
F	Do you?	
Q	I go on a little train and I	<i>Picture of despondent</i>
	get ice cream from my dad	<i>kitten approaching</i>
F	We go to the train station	<i>ice cream stall</i>
	<u>"I ain't got none"</u>	Kevin was very sad
	<u>"Give me a penny then I can</u>	<i>Picture of stall holder</i>
	<u>buy another ice cream"</u>	<i>handing kitten ice cream</i>
		He got a free ice cream

--- denotes reading intonation i.e. clear word separation
 in terms of pitch as well as phonemically

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